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The World's Classics

CXXII

MRS. CAUDLE'S CURTAIN LECTURES, &c.

OXFORD : HORACE HART
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

MRS. CAUDLE'S CURTAIN LECTURES

AND OTHER

STORIES AND ESSAYS

BY

DOUGLAS JERROLD

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY WALTER JERROLD
AND 90 ILLUSTRATIONS

HENRY FROWDE
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON, NEW YORK AND TORONTO

PR 4225 . J6 A66

DOUGLAS WILLIAM JERROLD

Born, Soho, London . . . . January 3, 1803
Died, Kilburn . . . . . June 8, 1857

'Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures' were first published in 1845. *Together with other selections from the writings of Douglas Jerrold they were first published in 'The World's Classics' in* 1907.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

In the mid-part of the nineteenth century the name of no living writer was more widely familiar than that of Douglas Jerrold: it was known as that of a dramatist, a political writer, a zealous advocate of social reform, a writer of fiction, a philosophical essayist, and above all as that of a conversational wit, and the creator of Mrs. Caudle—a man whose 'good things' were repeated zestfully by all who could appreciate the intellectual acuteness which so often lies behind an apparent play upon words. Had the work which he dissipated over various fields of more or less inherently ephemeral literature been devoted to one branch alone his name would perhaps to-day have ranked with the highest of his contemporaries, for his fame has probably suffered from the very multiplicity of ways in which his talent was expressed. So far as widest popularity is concerned his name is known to-day as that of the author of *Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures*, and of *Black-Eyed Susan*, and as that attached to many witticisms—witticisms, too, that are often repeated as things said, while they are frequently lines taken from his printed works and sometimes are the jokes of other people fathered on him.

Douglas William Jerrold was born in Soho, London, on January 3, 1803, but while still an infant was taken to Cranbrook, in Kent, and thence, while still a child, to Sheerness, where his early years were passed and where he received his schooling. His father, Samuel Jerrold, an actor and theatrical manager, who became lessee of the Sheerness and Southend Theatres, was an elderly man when he married for the second time in 1795, and Douglas Jerrold was the youngest child of that second marriage. He joined the navy in his

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eleventh year as a first-class volunteer, and continued his schooling on board H.M.S. *Namur*, then stationed as the guardship at the Nore, his Captain being one of the two sailor brothers of Jane Austen. From the guardship, as midshipman, Jerrold was transferred to a brig engaged in convoying troops to, and bringing back wounded soldiers from, Belgium. In the autumn of 1815 his ship was paid off, and the boy, not yet thirteen years of age, had to seek some new kind of work. With the peace the fortunes of the Sheerness Theatre declined, and early in 1816 the Jerrold family removed to London, where Douglas began life again as a printer's apprentice, and at the same time set zealously to work to complete his own education, and also to make early exercises in the branches of literary work which were to become his own. He was but eighteen when his first play was produced at Sadler's Wells Theatre, with such success that it was translated into French, seen by some one in a Paris theatre, and promptly adapted for the London stage! thus forestalling in fact a copyright problem which De Quincey was later to propose in theory.

While Douglas Jerrold was earning his livelihood as a compositor he was looking to the theatre, to literature, and to journalism, as offering the proper field for his energies, and when, after having criticized a performance of *Der Freyschütz* and dropped his article in the editor's box, his copy was given him to compose, with an added note to the anonymous contributor asking for further work, he may well have realized that his ambitions were in a fair way towards being gratified.

In 1824 he married, and either shortly before or shortly after that event finally gave up the work of the composing-room. In 1825 he was appointed dramatic writer to the Coburg Theatre, undertaking to write plays—and frequently on ordered themes—as often as wanted. After a few years he transferred his pen from the service of the Coburg to that of the Surrey Theatre, and there, after two pieces of his had been produced in the preceding months, was brought out *Black-Eyed*

Susan, with which at once he secured a popular triumph. Though frequently referred to as Jerrold's first dramatic essay, and as having been written before he was one-and-twenty, this piece was the twenty-first of his plays to be acted, and was brought out when he was six-and-twenty. *Black-Eyed Susan* was an instant success, was taken to the patent houses, and though the author did not reap any great monetary reward it assured him of a position as dramatic writer, a position which he strengthened during the following five-and-twenty years by a brilliant series of witty comedies.

Apart from his writings for the stage, Douglas Jerrold had also by this time won his way into various periodicals of the day, and articles and stories from his pen appeared in the *New Monthly* and other magazines. He became part proprietor in an unsuccessful Sunday newspaper, and during the rush of small comic and satirical periodicals which characterized the journalistic activity of the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, he edited a little weekly, entitled *Punch in London*. In 1838, a number of his sketches contributed to *Blackwood's* and other magazines were published in three volumes, under the collective title of *Men of Character*, with a series of illustrations by William Makepeace Thackeray.

In July, 1841, *Punch* was started, and from the second number Douglas Jerrold was represented in its pages, at first with a series of weekly energetic political leaders signed 'Q.' These leaders, which gave its original political colour to the journal, were supplemented by *The Story of a Feather*, and many shorter writings, and at the beginning of 1845 there commenced *Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures*, the most popular serial that the journal ever published. The 'lectures' were hailed with delight, and it is said that the newsagents, before ordering their supplies of the paper, would inquire if there was any more of Mrs. Caudle. Mr. M. H. Spielmann, in his *History of Punch*, has recorded how '"Mrs. Caudle" burst upon the town. In common with a few other things achieved by *Punch*, it created a national

furore and set the whole country laughing and talking. Other nations soon took up the conversation and the laughter, and " Mrs. Caudle " passed into the popular mind and took a permanent place in the language, and in an incredibly short space of time.' Mrs. Caudle was followed in *Punch* by some other serials from the same pen, and week by week up to his death he contributed varied material to the same journal, sometimes in lengthy papers and frequently in brief stinging paragraphs.

Besides his activity on *Punch*, however, Jerrold continued to write for the stage, and entered into various experiments with periodicals, now as editor of *The Illuminated Magazine* and later of *Douglas Jerrold's Shilling Magazine*—the first magazine at the popular price—and *Douglas Jerrold's Weekly Newspaper* (1846–1848), while on the starting of the *Daily News* he acted for a time as sub-editor of that journal. In 1852 he was offered the editorship of *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, and thenceforward until his death—June 8, 1857—his work was mainly divided between control of that popular periodical, of which it was said that ' he found it in the gutter and annexed it to literature ', and contributing to *Punch*.

Most of Douglas Jerrold's work was written for periodicals or for the stage—nearly seventy of his plays were produced between 1821 and 1854—and only one of his stories, ' A Man Made of Money,' was issued in the then popular form of monthly parts, in which most of Dickens's and Thackeray's novels were originally published. His very success as a writer for the magazines militated against his concentrating on long pieces of work. The eager spirit of the man seemed to impel him to say that which he had to say shortly, and then get on to something fresh. He was strongly imbued with the spirit of his time—the spirit that made Dickens utilize his extraordinary powers of dealing with eccentricity of character to the attacking of social abuses in schools, in workhouses, and in debtors' prisons ; the spirit that moved Thomas Hood to the writing of odes and addresses in which the new spirit of Reform was

speaking no less surely than it was on the political platform, the spirit which later made him when dying deal directly with some of the evils of our social system in undying verse. Hood did not avow his purpose. Dickens, having established himself as the great comic novelist of his time, did, and so also did Douglas Jerrold, in no equivocal fashion. Art for art's sake was a later ery, the cry of decadence; was perhaps an unconscious attempt to restore the balance, when the 'purpose' had come to take too prominent a position. With many of the early Victorian writers 'purpose' was an important article of their literary creed, but though keenly alert to the matter they were by no means careless of the manner. In the prospectus which he penned when starting *Douglas Jerrold's Shilling Magazine* the editor spoke with emphatic directness—

'It will be our chief object to make every essay—however brief, and however light and familiar its treatment—breathe WITH A PURPOSE. Experience assures us that, especially at the present day, it is by a defined purpose alone, whether significant in twenty pages or in twenty lines, that the sympathies of the world are to be engaged, and its support ensured.

'Whilst dealing with the highest social claims of our countrymen, we shall not exclude from our pages either Sketch of Character—Tale—History—or Romance. Far otherwise. It will be our earnest desire to avail ourselves of all and every variety of literature, of illustrating and working out some wholesome principle. Mere stories, made like Twelfth-night heroes, of mere sugar, we shall certainly eschew.

'Neither would we have "the light reader" take alarm at our graver subjects. They, too, it is hoped, may be discussed with no very violent call upon his wakefulness. It is not necessary that such themes—like bullets—should be cast in lead to do the surest service.'

These words expressed something of the deep-seated zeal of the man for working towards the amelioration of the mass of the people; he was, to use Thackeray's phrase, one of those potent people the 'weekday

preachers'. Thus it is that in stories or sketches the most fanciful, as in his few more definitely didactic essays, he had generally a something in the way of a lesson, either in the thing said or in the more elusive 'moral' which a reader may recognize or not as he chooses.

In this volume are given, besides the most popular of Jerrold's writings, various stories, papers, and essays, illustrating at once in matter and manner his characteristics as an author. In selecting works for inclusion it has been thought advisable not to take anything from the collected shorter writings as he arranged them himself,—from *Men of Character*, *Sketches of the English*, and *Cakes and Ale*, tempting as it is to include pieces of such happy humour as *The Romance of a Key Hole*, of such grimness as *The Lesson of Life*, such significant fun as many of the *Men of Character*. In the *Caudle Lectures* this collection certainly includes Douglas Jerrold's best known work, and to this has been added *Mr. Caudle's Breakfast Talk* which appeared in the *Punch Almanac* for 1846 and has not hitherto been reprinted, except in a miscellany volume issued in America some years ago. Though it is difficult for the reader to realize Job Caudle, remarried, treating his second wife as his first wife treated him, it will be readily recognized that the little 'Talks' have much of the fun, observation, and insight of the original.

For the rest here are simple stories, romantic tales, pleasant apologues, and two of the brief pointed 'Essays' which the author added to the little volume when he printed *The Chronicles of Clovernook* in book form—stories and papers in which the inspiring 'purpose' is sometimes so obvious that it may be recognized by the running reader, sometimes so subtly interwoven with the substance of the paper as to be something quite beside the interest in the story itself.

WALTER JERROLD.

A CHRONOLOGY OF DOUGLAS JERROLD'S LIFE AND WORKS

Douglas William Jerrold born in Soho, London, January 3	1803
Removed in infancy to Cranbrook, Kent	1803
Removed to Sheerness	1807
At school at Sheerness	1809
Joined the Navy as Midshipman, December 22	1813
Paid off from the Navy, October	1815
Removed to London, January 1	1816
Compositor on the *Sunday Monitor*	1819
The first of upwards of sixty plays, *More Frightened than Hurt*, produced at Sadler's Wells, April 30	1821
Married Mary Ann Swann, August 15	1824
Engaged at a weekly salary to write plays for the Coburg Theatre	1825
Engaged similarly at the Surrey Theatre	1829
Black-Eyed Susan produced at the Surrey, June 8	1829
Sub-editor of *The Ballot*	1829
Thomas à Becket produced at the Surrey, November 30	1830
The Devil's Ducat, in blank verse, produced at the Adelphi, December 16	1830
The Bride of Ludgate produced at Drury Lane, December 8	1831
The Rent Day produced at Drury Lane, January 25	1832
Edited, during its existence of a few weeks, *Punch in London*	1832
Nell Gwynne produced at Covent Garden, January 9	1833
The Housekeeper produced at the Haymarket, July 7	1833
The Wedding Gown produced at Drury Lane, January 2	1834
Three plays produced simultaneously: *The Hazard of the Die* at Drury Lane, *The Schoolfellows* at the Queen's, and *The Man's an Ass* at the Olympic on February 17	1835

	PAGE
With his brother-in-law, W. J. Hammond, took the Strand Theatre and for a short time acted in his own play *The Painter of Ghent*	1836
Published *Men of Character* in three volumes illustrated by W. M. Thackeray	1838
Published *The Handbook of Swindling* (anon.)	1839
Edited and contributed to *Heads of the People*	1840–1841
Punch—to which he contributed from the second number until his death—started July 17	1841
Produced *Bubbles of the Day*	1842
,, *Prisoner of War*	1842
Edited *The Illuminated Magazine*	1843–1844
Published *Punch's Letters to His Son*	1843
,, *The Story of a Feather*	1844
Edited *Douglas Jerrold's Shilling Magazine*	1845–1848
Produced *Time works Wonders* at the Haymarket, April 26	1845
Published *Punch's Complete Letter Writer*	1846
,, *Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures*	1846
,, *The Chronicles of Clovernook*	1846
Edited *Douglas Jerrold's Weekly Newspaper*	1846–1848
Published *A Man Made of Money*	1849
Produced *The Catspaw*	1850
,, *Retired from Business*	1851
Collected *Works* in eight volumes	1851–1854
Published *Cakes and Ale*	1852
Edited *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*	1852–1857
Started a penny subscription for presentation to Kossuth	1853
Produced *St. Cupid, or Dorothy's Fortune*	1853
,, *A Heart of Gold*	1854
Douglas Jerrold died at 11 Greville Place, Kilburn Priory, June 8	1857

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MRS. CAUDLE'S CURTAIN LECTURES

AND

MR. CAUDLE'S BREAKFAST TALK

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

It has happened to the writer that two, or three, or ten, or twenty gentlewomen have asked him—and asked in various notes of wonder, pity, and reproof—

'*What could have made you think of Mrs. Caudle?*

'*How could such a thing have entered any man's mind?*'

There are subjects that seem like rain drops to fall upon a man's head, the head itself having nothing to do with the matter. The result of no train of thought, there is the picture, the statue, the book, wafted, like the smallest seed, into the brain to feed upon the soil, such as it may be and grow there. And this was, no doubt, the accidental cause of the literary sowing and expansion—unfolding like a night-flower—of Mrs. Caudle.

But let a jury of gentlewomen decide.

It was a thick, black wintry afternoon, when the writer stopt in the front of the playground of a suburban school. The ground swarmed with boys full of the Saturday's holiday. The earth seemed roofed with the oldest lead, and the wind came, sharp as Shylock's knife, from the Minories. But those happy boys ran and jumped, and hopped, and shouted, and—unconscious men in miniature!—in their own world of frolic, had no thought of the full-length men they would some day become; drawn out into grave citizenship; formal, respectable, responsible. To them the sky was of any or all colours; and for that keen east wind—if it was called the east wind—cutting the shoulder-blades of old, old men of forty [1]—they in their immortality of boyhood had the redder faces, and the nimbler blood for it.

[1] The author was just 42 when he began the 'Caudle Lectures.'

And the writer, looking dreamily into that playground, still mused on the robust jollity of those little fellows, to whom the tax-gatherer was as yet a rarer animal than baby hippopotamus. Heroic boyhood, so ignorant of the future in the knowing enjoyment of the present! And the writer still dreaming and musing, and still following no distinct line of thought, there struck upon him, like notes of sudden household music, these words —CURTAIN LECTURES.

One moment there was no living object save those racing, shouting boys; and the next, as though a white dove had alighted on the pen hand of the writer, there was—MRS. CAUDLE.

Ladies of the jury, are there not then some subjects of letters that mysteriously assert an effect without any discoverable cause? Otherwise, wherefore should the thought of CURTAIN LECTURES grow from a school ground—wherefore, among a crowd of holiday school-boys, should appear MRS. CAUDLE?

For the LECTURES themselves, it is feared they must be given up as a farcical desecration of a solemn time-honoured privilege; it may be, exercised once in a life time,—and that once having the effect of a hundred repetitions, as Job lectured his wife. And Job's wife, a certain Mohammedan writer delivers, having committed a fault in her love to her husband, he swore that on his recovery he would deal her a hundred stripes. Job got well, and his heart was touched and taught by the tenderness to keep his vow, and still to chastise his help-mate; for he smote her once with a palm-branch having a hundred leaves.

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

INTRODUCTION

SITTING UP FOR MR. CAUDLE

POOR Job Caudle was one of the few men whom Nature, in her casual bounty to women, sends into the world as patient listeners. He was, perhaps, in more respects than one, all ears. And these ears, Mrs. Caudle — his lawful, wedded wife as she would ever and anon impress upon him, for she was not a woman to wear chains without shaking them—took whole and sole possession of. They were her entire property ; as expressly made to convey to Caudle's brain the stream of wisdom that continually flowed from the lips of his wife, as was the tin funnel through which Mrs. Caudle in vintage time bottled her elder wine. There was, however, this difference between the wisdom and the wine. The wine was always sugared : the wisdom, never. It was expressed crude from the heart of Mrs. Caudle ;

who, doubtless, trusted to the sweetness of her husband's disposition to make it agree with him.

Philosophers have debated whether morning or night is most conducive to the strongest and clearest moral impressions. The Grecian sage confessed that his labours smelt of the lamp. In like manner did Mrs. Caudle's wisdom smell of the rushlight. She knew that her husband was too much distracted by his business as toyman and doll-merchant to digest her lessons in the broad day. Besides, she could never make sure of him: he was always liable to be summoned to the shop. Now from eleven at night until seven in the morning there was no retreat for him. He was compelled to lie and listen. Perhaps there was little magnanimity in this on the part of Mrs. Caudle; but in marriage, as in war, it is permitted to take every advantage of the enemy. Besides, Mrs. Caudle copied very ancient and classic authority. Minerva's bird, the very wisest thing in feathers, is silent all the day. So was Mrs. Caudle. Like the owl, she hooted only at night.

Mr. Caudle was blessed with an indomitable constitution. One fact will prove the truth of this. He lived thirty years with Mrs. Caudle, surviving her. Yes, it took thirty years for Mrs. Caudle to lecture and dilate upon the joys, griefs, duties, and vicissitudes comprised within that seemingly small circle—the wedding-ring. We say, seemingly small; for the thing, as viewed by the vulgar, naked eye, is a tiny hoop made for the third feminine finger. Alack! like the ring of Saturn, for good or evil, it circles a whole world. Or, to take a less gigantic figure, it compasses a vast region: it may be Arabia Felix, and it may be Arabia Petrea.

A lemon-hearted cynic might liken the wedding-ring to an ancient circus, in which wild animals clawed one another for the sport of lookers-on. Perish the hyperbole! We would rather compare it to an elfin ring, in which dancing fairies made the sweetest music for infirm humanity.

Manifold are the uses of rings. Even swine are tamed by them. You will see a vagrant, hilarious, devastating

porker—a full-blooded fellow that would bleed into many, many fathoms of black pudding—you will see him, escaped from his proper home, straying in a neighbour's garden. How he tramples upon the heart's-ease: how, with quivering snout, he roots up lilies—odoriferous bulbs! Here he gives a reckless snatch at thyme and marjoram—and here he munches violets and gilly-flowers. At length the marauder is detected, seized by his owner, and driven, beaten home. To make the porker less dangerous, it is determined that he shall be *ringed*. The sentence is pronounced—execution ordered. Listen to his screams!

> Would you not think the knife was in his throat?
> And yet they're only boring through his nose!

Hence, for all future time, the porker behaves himself with a sort of forced propriety—for in either nostril he carries a ring. It is, for the greatness of humanity, a saddening thought, that sometimes men must be treated no better than pigs.

But Mr. Job Caudle was not of these men. Marriage to him was not made a necessity. No; for him call it if you will a happy chance—a golden accident. It is, however, enough for us to know that he was married; and was therefore made the recipient of a wife's wisdom. Mrs. Caudle, like Mahomet's dove, continually pecked at the good man's ears; and it is a happiness to learn from what he left behind that he had hived all her sayings in his brain; and further, that he employed the mellow evening of his life to put such sayings down, that, in due season, they might be enshrined in imperishable type.

When Mr. Job Caudle was left in this briary world without his daily guide and nocturnal monitress, he was in the ripe fulness of fifty-seven. For three hours at least after he went to bed—such slaves are we to habit—he could not close an eye. His wife still talked at his side. True it was, she was dead and decently interred. His mind—it was a comfort to know it—could not wander on this point; this he knew.

Nevertheless, his wife was with him. The Ghost of her Tongue still talked as in the life; and again and again did Job Caudle hear the monitions of bygone years. At times, so loud, so lively, so real were the sounds, that Job, with a cold chill, doubted if he were really widowed. And then, with the movement of an arm, a foot, he would assure himself that he was alone in his holland. Nevertheless, the talk continued. It was terrible to be thus haunted by a voice: to have advice, commands, remonstrance, all sorts of saws and adages still poured upon him, and no visible wife. Now did the voice speak from the curtains; now from the tester; and now did it whisper to Job from the very pillow that he pressed. 'It 's a dreadful thing that her tongue should walk in this manner,' said Job, and then he thought confusedly of exorcism, or at least of counsel from the parish priest.

Whether Job followed his own brain, or the wise direction of another, we know not. But he resolved every night to commit to paper one curtain lecture of his late wife. The employment would, possibly, lay the ghost that haunted him. It was her dear tongue that cried for justice, and when thus satisfied, it might possibly rest in quiet. And so it happened. Job faithfully chronicled all his late wife's lectures; the ghost of her tongue was thenceforth silent, and Job slept all his after nights in peace.

When Job died, a small packet of papers was found inscribed as follows:—

> '*Curtain Lectures delivered in the course of Thirty Years by Mrs. Margaret Caudle, and suffered by Job, her Husband.*'

That Mr. Caudle had his eye upon the future printer, is made pretty probable by the fact that in most places he had affixed the text—such text for the most part arising out of his own daily conduct—to the lecture of the night. He had also, with an instinctive knowledge of the dignity of literature, left a bank-note of very fair amount with the manuscript. Following our duty as editor, we trust we have done justice to both documents.

Mrs Caudles Curtain Lectures.

LECTURE I

MR. CAUDLE HAS LENT FIVE POUNDS TO A FRIEND

MRS. CAUDLE'S DEAR CHILDREN

YOU ought to be very rich, Mr. Caudle. I wonder who'd lend you five pounds? But so it is: a wife may work and may slave! Ha, dear! the many things that might have been done with five pounds. As if people picked up money in the street! But you always were a fool, Mr. Caudle! I've wanted a black satin gown these three years, and that five pounds

would have entirely bought it. But it 's no matter how I go,—not at all. Everybody says I don't dress as becomes your wife—and I don't ; but what 's that to you, Mr. Caudle? Nothing. Oh, no ! you can have fine feelings for everybody but those belonging to you. I wish people knew you, as I do—that 's all. You like to be called liberal—and your poor family pays for it.

'All the girls want bonnets, and where they're to come from I can't tell. Half five pounds would have bought 'em—but now they must go without. Of course, *they* belong to you : and anybody but your own flesh and body, Mr. Caudle !

'The man called for the water-rate to-day ; but I should like to know how people are to pay taxes, who throw away five pounds to every fellow that asks them ?

'Perhaps you don't know that Jack, this morning, knocked his shuttlecock through his bedroom window. I was going to send for the glazier to mend it ; but after you lent that five pounds I was sure we couldn't afford it. Oh, no ! the window must go as it is ; and pretty weather for a dear child to sleep with a broken window. He's got a cold already on his lungs, and I shouldn't at all wonder if that broken window settled him. If the dear boy dies, his death will be upon his father's head ; for I'm sure we can't now pay to mend windows. We might though, and do a good many more things too, if people didn't throw away their five pounds.

'Next Tuesday the fire-insurance is due. I should like to know how it 's to be paid ? Why, it can't be paid at all ! That five pounds would have more than done it —and now, insurance is out of the question. And there never were so many fires as there are now. I shall never close my eyes all night,—but what 's that to you, so people can call you liberal, Mr. Caudle ? Your wife and children may all be burnt alive in their beds—as all of us to a certainty shall be, for the insurance *must* drop. And after we've insured for so many years ! But how, I should like to know, are people to insure who make ducks and drakes of their five pounds ?

'I did think we might go to Margate this summer.

There 's poor little Caroline, I'm sure she wants the sea. But no, dear creature ! she must stop at home—all of us must stop at home—she'll go into a consumption, there 's no doubt of that ; yes—sweet little angel !—

MR. CAUDLE LENDS FIVE POUNDS TO A FRIEND

I've made up my mind to lose her, *now*. The child might have been saved ; but people can't save their children and throw away their five pounds too.

' I wonder where poor little Mopsy is ! While you were lending that five pounds, the dog ran out of the

shop. You know, I never let it go into the street, for fear it should be bit by some mad dog, and come home and bite all the children. It wouldn't now at all astonish me if the animal was to come back with the hydrophobia, and give it to all the family. However, what 's your family to you, so you can play the liberal creature with five pounds ?

' Do you hear that shutter, how it 's banging to and fro ? Yes,—I know what it wants as well as you ; it wants a new fastening. I was going to send for the blacksmith to-day, but now it 's out of the question : *now* it must bang of nights, since you've thrown away five pounds.

' Ha ! there 's the soot falling down the chimney. If I hate the smell of anything, it's the smell of soot. And you know it ; but what are my feelings to you ? *Sweep the chimney !* Yes, it 's all very fine to say sweep the chimney—but how are chimneys to be swept—how are they to be paid for by people who don't take care of their five pounds ?

' Do you hear the mice running about the room ? *I* hear them. If they were to drag only you out of bed, it would be no matter. *Set a trap for them !* Yes, it 's easy enough to say—set a trap for 'em. But how are people to afford mouse-traps, when every day they lose five pounds ?

' Hark ! I'm sure there 's a noise downstairs. It wouldn't at all surprise me if there were thieves in the house. Well, it *may* be the cat ; but thieves are pretty sure to come in some night. There 's a wretched fastening to the back-door ; but these are not times to afford bolts and bars, when people won't take care of their five pounds.

' Mary Anne ought to have gone to the dentist's to-morrow. She wants three teeth taken out. Now, it can't be done. Three teeth that quite disfigure the child's mouth. But there they must stop, and spoil the sweetest face that was ever made. Otherwise, she'd have been a wife for a lord. Now, when she grows up, who'll have her ? Nobody. We shall die, and leave

her alone and unprotected in the world. But what do you care for that? Nothing; so you can squander away five pounds.'

'*And thus*,' comments Caudle, '*according to my wife, she—dear soul!—couldn't have a satin gown—the girls couldn't have new bonnets—the water-rate must stand over—Jack must get his death through a broken window—our fire-insurance couldn't be paid, so that we should all fall victims to the devouring element—we couldn't go to Margate, and Caroline would go to an early grave—the dog would come home and bite us all mad—the shutter would go banging for ever—the soot would always fall—the mice never let us have a wink of sleep—thieves be always breaking in the house—our dear Mary Anne be for ever left an unprotected maid,—and with other evils falling upon us, all, all because I would go on lending five pounds!*'

LECTURE II

MR. CAUDLE HAS BEEN AT A TAVERN WITH A FRIEND, AND IS 'ENOUGH TO POISON A WOMAN' WITH TOBACCO-SMOKE

'OOR me! Ha! I'm sure I don't know who'd be a poor woman! I don't know who'd tie themselves up to a man, if they knew only half they'd have to bear. A wife must stay at home, and be a drudge, whilst a man can go anywhere. It 's enough for a wife to sit like Cinderella by the ashes, whilst her husband can go drinking and singing at a tavern. *You never sing?* How do I know you never sing? It's very well for you to say so; but if I could hear you, I daresay you're among the worst of 'em.

'And now, I suppose, it will be the tavern every night? If you think I'm going to sit up for you, Mr. Caudle, you're very much mistaken. No: and I'm not going to get out of my warm bed to let you in, either. No: nor Susan shan't sit up for you. No: nor you shan't have a latchkey. I'm not going to sleep with the door upon the latch, to be murdered before the morning.

'Faugh! Pah! Whewgh! That filthy tobacco-smoke! It's enough to kill any decent woman. You know I hate tobacco, and yet you will do it. *You don't*

smoke yourself? What of that? If you go among people who *do* smoke, you're just as bad, or worse. You might as well smoke—indeed, better, Better smoke yourself than come home with other people's smoke all in your hair and whiskers.

PRETTYMAN TAKING THE KEYS FROM HIS WIFE'S POCKET

'I never knew any good come to a man who went to a tavern. Nice companions he picks up there! Yes! people who make it a boast to treat their wives like slaves, and ruin their families. There 's that wretch

Harry Prettyman. See what he's come to! He doesn't get home now till two in the morning; and then in what a state! He begins quarrelling with the door-mat, that his poor wife may be afraid to speak to him. A mean wretch! But don't you think I'll be like Mrs. Prettyman. No: I wouldn't put up with it from the best man that ever trod. You'll not make me afraid to speak to you, however you may swear at the door-mat. No, Mr. Caudle, that you won't.

'*You don't intend to stay out till two in the morning?* How do you know what you'll do when you get among such people? Men can't answer for themselves when they get boozing one with another. They never think of their poor wives, who are grieving and wearing themselves out at home. A nice headache you'll have to-morrow morning—or rather *this* morning; for it must be past twelve. *You won't have a headache?* It's very well for you to say so, but I know you will; and then you may nurse yourself for me. Ha! that filthy tobacco again! No; I shall not go to sleep like a good soul. How's people to go to sleep when they're suffocated?

'Yes, Mr. Caudle, you'll be nice and ill in the morning! But don't you think I'm going to let you have your breakfast in bed, like Mrs. Prettyman. I'll not be such a fool. No; nor I won't have discredit brought upon the house by sending for soda-water early, for all the neighbourhood to say, "Caudle was drunk last night." No: I've some regard for the dear children, if you haven't. No: nor you shan't have broth for dinner. Not a neck of mutton crosses my threshold, I can tell you.

'*You won't want soda, and you won't want broth?* All the better. You wouldn't get 'em if you did, I can assure you.——Dear, dear, dear! That filthy tobacco! I'm sure it's enough to make me as bad as you are. Talking about getting divorced,—I'm sure tobacco ought to be good grounds. How little does a woman think, when she marries, that she gives herself up to be poisoned! You men contrive to have it all of

your own side, you do. Now if I was to go and leave you and the children, a pretty noise there'd be! You, however, can go and smoke no end of pipes and——*You didn't smoke?* It 's all the same, Mr. Caudle, if you go among smoking people. Folks are known by their company. You'd better smoke yourself, than bring home the pipes of all the world.

'Yes, I see how it will be. Now you've once gone to a tavern, you'll always be going. You'll be coming home tipsy every night; and tumbling down and breaking your leg, and putting out your shoulder; and bringing all sorts of disgrace and expense upon us. And then you'll be getting into a street fight—oh! I know your temper too well to doubt it, Mr. Caudle—and be knocking down some of the police. And then I know what will follow. It *must* follow. Yes, you'll be sent for a month or six weeks to the treadmill. Pretty thing that, for a respectable tradesman, Mr. Caudle, to be put upon the treadmill with all sorts of thieves and vagabonds, and—there, again, that horrible tobacco!—and riffraff of every kind. I should like to know how your children are to hold up their heads, after their father has been upon the treadmill?——No; I *won't* go to sleep. And I'm not talking of what's impossible. I know it will all happen—every bit of it. If it wasn't for the dear children, you might be ruined and I wouldn't so much as speak about it, but—oh, dear, dear! at least you might go where they smoke *good* tobacco—but I can't forget that I'm their mother. At least, they shall have *one* parent.

'Taverns! Never did a man go to a tavern who didn't die a beggar. And how your pot-companions will laugh at you when they see your name in the Gazette! For it *must* happen. Your business is sure to fall off; for what respectable people will buy toys for their children of a drunkard? You're not a drunkard! No: but you will be—it 's all the same.

'You've begun by staying out till midnight. By-and-by 'twill be all night. But don't you think, Mr. Caudle, you shall ever have a key. I know you. Yes;

you'd do exactly like that Prettyman, and what did he do, only last Wednesday? Why, he let himself in about four in the morning, and brought home with him his pot-companion, Puffy. His dear wife woke at six, and saw Prettyman's dirty boots at her bedside. And where was the wretch, her husband? Why, he was drinking downstairs—swilling. Yes; worse than a

RETURNING FROM THE TAVERN

midnight robber, he'd taken the keys out of his dear wife's pockets—ha! what that poor creature has to bear!—and had got at the brandy. A pretty thing for a wife to wake at six in the morning, and instead of her husband to see his dirty boots!

'But I'll not be made your victim, Mr. Caudle, not

I. You shall never get at my keys, for they shall lie under my pillow—under my own head, Mr. Caudle.

'You'll be ruined, but if I can help it, you shall ruin nobody but yourself.

'Oh, that hor—hor—hor—i—ble tob—ac——co!'

To this lecture, Caudle affixes no comment. A certain proof, we think, that the man had nothing to say for himself.

LECTURE III

MR. CAUDLE JOINS A CLUB—'THE SKYLARKS'

HALF-PAST TWELVE AT THE CLUB

WELL, if a woman hadn't better be in her grave than be married! That is, if she can't be married to a decent man. No; I don't care if you are tired, I *sha'n't* let you go to sleep. No, and I won't say what I have to say in the morning; I'll say it now. It 's all very well for you to come home at what time you like—it 's now half-past twelve — and expect I'm to hold my tongue, and let you go to

sleep. What next, I wonder? A woman had better be sold for a slave at once.

'And so you've gone and joined a club? The Skylarks, indeed! A pretty skylark you'll make of yourself! But I won't stay and be ruined by you. No: I'm determined on that. I'll go and take the dear children, and you may get who you like to keep your house. That is, as long as you have a house to keep—and that won't be long, I know.

'How any decent man can go and spend his nights in a tavern!—oh, yes, Mr. Caudle; I daresay you *do* go for rational conversation. I should like to know how many of you would care for what you call rational conversation, if you had it without your filthy brandy-and-water; yes, and your more filthy tobacco-smoke. I'm sure the last time you came home, I had the headache for a week. But I know who it is who 's taking you to destruction. It 's that brute, Prettyman. He has broken his own poor wife's heart, and now he wants to—but don't you think it, Mr. Caudle; I'll not have my peace of mind destroyed by the best man that ever trod. Oh, yes! I know you don't care so long as you can appear well to all the world,—but the world little thinks how you behave to me. It shall know it, though—that I'm determined.

'How any man can leave his own happy fireside to go and sit, and smoke, and drink, and talk with people who wouldn't one of 'em lift a finger to save him from hanging—how any man can leave his wife—and a good wife, too, though I say it—for a parcel of pot-companions—oh, it 's disgraceful, Mr. Caudle; it 's unfeeling. No man who had the least love for his wife could do it.

'And I suppose this is to be the case every Saturday? But I know what I'll do. I know—it 's no use, Mr. Caudle, your calling me a good creature: I'm not such a fool as to be coaxed in that way. No; if you want to go to sleep, you should come home in Christian time, not at half-past twelve. There was a time, when you were as regular at your fireside as the kettle. That was when you were a decent man, and didn't go amongst

Heaven knows who, drinking and smoking, and making what you think your jokes. I never heard any good come to a man who cared about jokes. No respectable tradesman does. But I know what I'll do: I'll scare away your Skylarks. The house serves liquor after twelve of a Saturday; and if I don't write to the magistrates, and have the licence taken away, I'm not lying in this bed this night. Yes, you may call me a foolish woman; but no, Mr. Caudle, no; it 's you who are the foolish man; or worse than a foolish man; you're a wicked one. If you were to die to-morrow—and people who go to public-houses do all they can to shorten their lives—I should like to know who would write upon your tombstone, "A tender husband and an affectionate father"? *I*——I'd have no such falsehoods told of you, I can assure you.

'Going and spending your money, and—nonsense! don't tell me—no, if you were ten times to swear it, I wouldn't believe that you only spent eighteenpence on a Saturday. You can't be all those hours and only spend eighteenpence. I know better. I'm not quite a fool, Mr. Caudle. A great deal you could have for eighteenpence! And all the Club married men and fathers of families. The more shame for 'em! Skylarks, indeed! They should call themselves Vultures; for they can only do as they do by eating up their innocent wives and children. Eighteenpence a week! And if it was only that,—Do you know what fifty-two eighteenpences come to in a year? Do you ever think of that, and see the gowns I wear? I'm sure I can't, out of the house-money, buy myself a pin-cushion; though I've wanted one these six months. No—not so much as a ball of cotton. But what do you care so you can get your brandy-and-water? There 's the girls, too—the things they want! They're never dressed like other people's children. But it 's all the same to their father. Oh, yes! So he can go with his Skylarks they may wear sackcloth for pinafores, and packthread for garters.

'You'd better not let that Mr. Prettyman come here,

that 's all ; or, rather, you'd better bring him once. Yes, I should like to see him. He wouldn't forget it. A man who, I may say, lives and moves only in a spittoon. A man who has a pipe in his mouth as constant as his front teeth. A sort of tavern king, with a lot of fools like you to laugh at what he thinks his jokes, and give him consequence. No, Mr. Caudle, no ; it 's no use your telling me to go to sleep, for I won't. Go to sleep, indeed ! I'm sure it 's almost time to get up. I hardly know what 's the use of coming to bed at all now.

' The Skylarks, indeed ! I suppose you'll be buying a " Little Warbler," and at your time of life, be trying to sing. The peacocks will sing next. A pretty name you'll get in the neighbourhood ; and, in a very little time, a nice face you'll have. Your nose is getting redder already : and you've just one of the noses that liquor always flies to. *You don't see it 's red ?* No—I daresay not—but *I* see it ; *I* see a great many things you don't. And so you'll go on. In a little time, with your brandy-and-water—don't tell me that you only take two small glasses : I know what men's two small glasses are ; in a little time you'll have a face all over as if it was made of red currant jam. And I should like to know who 's to endure you then ? I won't, and so don't think it. Don't come to me.

' Nice habits men learn at clubs ! There 's Joskins : he was a decent creature once, and now I'm told he has more than once boxed his wife's ears. He's a Skylark too. And I suppose, some day, you'll be trying to box *my* ears ? Don't attempt it, Mr. Caudle ; I say don't attempt it. Yes—it 's all very well for you to say you don't mean it,—but I only say again, don't attempt it. You'd rue it till the day of your death, Mr. Caudle.

' Going and sitting for four hours at a tavern ! What men, unless they had their wives with them, can find to talk about, I can't think. No good, of course.

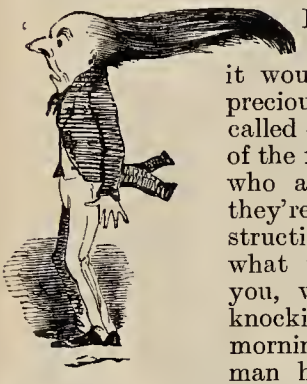
' Eighteenpence a week—and drinking brandy-and-water, enough to swim a boat ! And smoking like the funnel of a steamship ! And I can't afford myself so

much as a piece of tape ! It 's brutal, Mr. Caudle. It 's ve-ve-ve—ry bru——tal.'

'*And here*,' says Caudle—'*Here, thank Heaven ! at last she fell asleep.*'

LECTURE IV

MR. CAUDLE HAS BEEN CALLED FROM HIS BED TO BAIL MR. PRETTYMAN FROM THE WATCH-HOUSE



IE, Mr. Caudle, I knew it would come to this. I said it would, when you joined those precious Skylarks. People being called out of their beds at all hours of the night, to bail a set of fellows who are never so happy as when they're leading sober men to destruction. I should like to know what the neighbours will think of you, with people from the police knocking at the door at two in the morning ? Don't tell me that the man has been ill-used : he 's not the man to be ill-used. And you must go and bail him ! I know the end of that : he'll run away, and you'll have to pay the money. I should like to know what 's the use of my working and slaving to save a farthing, when you throw away pounds upon your precious Skylarks. A pretty cold you'll have to-morrow morning, being called out of your warm bed this weather ; but don't you think I'll nurse you—not I ; not a drop of gruel do you get from me.

'I'm sure you've plenty of ways of spending your money—not throwing it away upon a set of dissolute peace-breakers. It 's all very well for you to say you haven't thrown away your money, but you will. He'll be certain to run off ; it isn't likely he'll go upon his

trial, and you'll be fixed with the bail. Don't tell me there 's no trial in the matter, because I know there is ; it 's for something more than quarrelling with the policeman that he was locked up. People aren't locked up for that. No, it 's for robbery, or something worse, perhaps.

'And as you have bailed him, people will think you

MR. CAUDLE AND THE POLICE

are as bad as he is. Don't tell me you couldn't help bailing him ; you should have shown yourself a respectable man, and have let him been sent to prison.

'Now people know you're the friend of drunken and disorderly persons, you'll never have a night's sleep in your bed. Not that it would matter what fell upon you, if it wasn't your poor wife who suffered. Of course all the business will be in the newspapers, and your

name with it. I shouldn't wonder, too, if they give your picture as they do the other folks of the Old Bailey. A pretty thing that, to go down to your children. I'm sure it will be enough to make them change their name. No, I shall not go to sleep; it 's all very well for you to say, go to sleep, after such a disturbance.

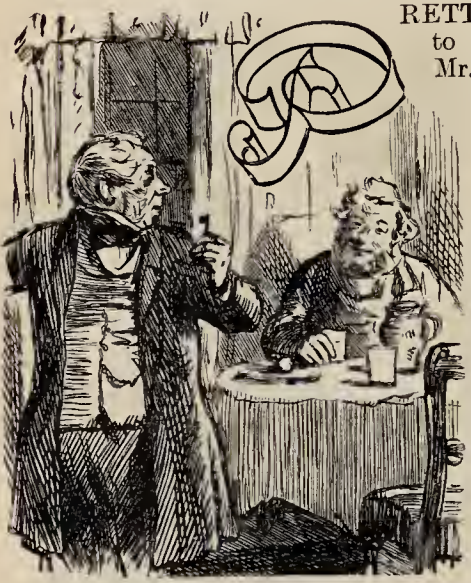
MR. CAUDLE IS CALLED UP AT TWO IN THE MORNING

But I shall not go to sleep, Mr. Caudle; certainly not.'

'*Her will, I have no doubt,*' says Caudle, '*was strong; but nature was stronger, and she* did *sleep; this night inflicting upon me a remarkably short lecture.*'

LECTURE V

MR. CAUDLE HAS REMAINED DOWNSTAIRS TILL PAST ONE, WITH A FRIEND



MRS. CAUDLE HAS LEFT THE KEY

RETTY time of night to come to bed, Mr. Caudle. Ugh! As cold, too, as any ice. Enough to give any woman her death, I'm sure. What! '*I shouldn't have locked up the coals?*

'If I hadn't, I've no doubt the fellow would have stayed all night. It 's all very well for you, Mr. Caudle, to bring people home—but I wish you 'd think first what 's for supper. That beautiful leg of pork would have served for our dinner to-morrow,—and now it 's gone. *I* can't keep the house upon the money, and I won't pretend to do it, if you bring a mob of people every night to clear out the cupboard.

'I wonder who'll be so ready to give you a supper when you want one: for want one you will, unless you change your plans. Don't tell me! I know I'm right. You'll first be eaten up, and then you'll be laughed at.

I know the world. No, indeed, Mr. Caudle, I don't think ill of everybody ; don't say that. But I can't see a leg of pork eaten up in that way, without asking myself what it 's all to end in if such things go on ? And

MR. CAUDLE HAS SENT THE GIRL OUT

then he must have pickles, too ! Couldn't be content with my cabbage—no, Mr. Caudle, I won't let you go to sleep. It 's very well for you to say let you go to sleep, after you've kept me awake till this time.

' *Why did I keep awake ?*

'How do you suppose I could go to sleep when I knew that man was below drinking up your substance in brandy-and-water? for he couldn't be content upon decent, wholesome gin. Upon my word, you ought to be a rich man, Mr. Caudle. You have such very fine friends, I wonder who gives you brandy when you go out!

'No, indeed, he couldn't be content with my pickled cabbage—and I should like to know who makes better—but he must have walnuts. And you, too, like a fool—now, don't you think to stop me, Mr. Caudle; a poor woman may be trampled to death, and never say a word—you, too, like a fool—I wonder who'd do it for you—to insist upon the girl going out for pickled walnuts. And in such a night too! With snow upon the ground. Yes; you're a man of fine feelings, you are, Mr. Caudle; but the world doesn't know you as I know you—fine feelings, indeed! to send the poor girl out, when I told you and told your friend, too—a pretty brute he is, I'm sure—that the poor girl had got a cold and I dare say chilblains on her toes. But I know what will be the end of that; she'll be laid up, and we shall have a nice doctor's bill. And you'll pay it, I can tell you—for *I* won't.

'*You wish you were out of the world?*

'Oh! yes, that 's all very easy. I'm sure *I* might wish it. Don't swear in that dreadful way! Aren't you afraid that the bed will open and swallow you? And don't swing about in that way. *That* will do no good. *That* won't bring back the leg of pork, and the brandy you've poured down both of your throats. Oh, I know it, I'm sure of it. I only recollected it when I'd got into bed—and if it hadn't been so cold, you'd have seen me downstairs again, I can tell you—I recollected it, and a pretty two hours I've passed—that I left the key in the cupboard.—and I know it—I could see by the manner of you when you came into the room—I know you've got at the other bottle. However, there 's one comfort: you told me to send for the best brandy—the very best—for your other friend, who called last

Wednesday. Ha! ha! It was British—the cheapest British—and nice and ill I hope the pair of you will be to-morrow.

'There 's only the bare bone of the leg of pork! but you'll get nothing else for dinner, I can tell you. It 's a dreadful thing that the poor children should go without,—but if they have such a father, they, poor things, must suffer for it.

'Nearly a whole leg of pork and a pint of brandy! A pint of brandy and a leg of pork. A leg of—leg—leg—pint——'

'*And mumbling the syllables,*' says Mr. Caudle's MS., '*she went to sleep.*'

LECTURE VI

MR. CAUDLE HAS LENT AN ACQUAINTANCE THE FAMILY UMBRELLA

AH! That 's the third umbrella gone since Christmas.

'*What were you to do?*

'Why, let him go home in the rain, to be sure. I'm very certain there was nothing about *him* that could spoil. Take cold, indeed! He doesn't look like one of the sort to take cold. Besides, he'd have better taken cold than take our only umbrella. Do you hear the rain, Mr. Caudle? I say, do you hear the rain? And as I'm alive, if it isn't St. Swithin's day! Do you hear it against the windows? Nonsense; you don't impose upon me. You can't be asleep with such a shower as that! Do you hear it, I say? Oh, you *do* hear it! Well, that 's a pretty flood, I think, to last for six weeks;

and no stirring all the time out of the house. Pooh! don't think me a fool, Mr. Caudle. Don't insult me. *He* return the umbrella! Anybody would think you were born yesterday. As if anybody ever *did* return an umbrella! There—do you hear it! Worse and worse!

MRS. CAUDLE OBJECTS TO LENDING THE UMBRELLA

Cats and dogs, and for six weeks, always six weeks. And no umbrella!

'I should like to know how the children are to go to school to-morrow? They sha'n't go through such

weather, I'm determined. No: they shall stop at home and never learn anything—the blessed creatures! —sooner than go and get wet. And when they grow up, I wonder who they'll have to thank for knowing nothing—who, indeed, but their father? People who can't feel for their own children ought never to be fathers.

'But I know why you lent the umbrella. Oh, yes; I know very well. I was going out to tea at dear mother's to-morrow—you knew that; and you did it on purpose. Don't tell me; you hate me to go there, and take every mean advantage to hinder me. But don't you think it, Mr. Caudle. No, sir; if it comes down in buckets-full I'll go all the more. No: and I won't have a cab. Where do you think the money 's to come from? You've got nice high notions at that club of yours. A cab, indeed! Cost me sixteenpence at least—sixteenpence! two-and-eightpence, for there 's back again. Cabs, indeed! I should like to know who 's to pay for 'em; *I* can't pay for 'em, and I'm sure you can't, if you go on as you do; throwing away your property, and beggaring your children—buying umbrellas!

'Do you hear the rain, Mr. Caudle? I say, do you hear it? But I don't care—I'll go to mother's to-morrow: I will; and what 's more, I'll walk every step of the way,—and you know that will give me my death. Don't call me a foolish woman, it 's you that 's the foolish man. You know I can't wear clogs; and with no umbrella, the wet 's sure to give me a cold—it always does. But what do you care for that? Nothing at all. I may be laid up for what you care, as I daresay I shall—and a pretty doctor's bill there'll be. I hope there will! It will teach you to lend your umbrellas again. I shouldn't wonder if I caught my death; yes: and that's what you lent the umbrella for. Of course!

'Nice clothes I shall get too, trapesing through weather like this. My gown and bonnet will be spoilt quite.

'*Needn't I wear 'em then?*

'Indeed, Mr. Caudle, I *shall* wear 'em. No, sir, I'm

not going out a dowdy to please you or anybody else. Gracious knows! it isn't often that I step over the threshold; indeed, I might as well be a slave at once,—better, I should say. But when I do go out, Mr. Caudle, I choose to go like a lady. Oh! that rain—if it isn't enough to break in the windows.

'Ugh! I do look forward with dread for to-morrow! How I am to go to mother's I'm sure I can't tell. But

MRS. CAUDLE 'WON'T HAVE A CAB'

if I die I'll do it. No, sir; I won't borrow an umbrella. No; and you sha'n't buy one. Now, Mr. Caudle, only listen to this: if you bring home another umbrella, I'll throw it in the street. I'll have my own umbrella or none at all.

'Ha! and it was only last week I had a new nozzle put to that umbrella. I'm sure, if I'd have known as

much as I do now, it might have gone without one for me. Paying for new nozzles, for other people to laugh at you. Oh, it 's all very well for you—you can go to sleep. You've no thought of your poor patient wife, and your own dear children. You think of nothing but lending umbrellas !

' Men, indeed ! —call themselves lords of the creation ! —pretty lords, when they can't even take care of an umbrella !

' I know that walk to-morrow will be the death of me. But that 's what you want—then you may go to your club and do as you like—and then, nicely my poor dear children will be used—but then, sir, then you'll be happy. Oh, don't tell me ! I know you will. Else you'd never have lent the umbrella !

' You have to go on Thursday about that summons ; and, of course, you can't go. No, indeed, you *don't* go without the umbrella. You may lose the debt for what I care—it won't be so much as spoiling your clothes—better lose it : people deserve to lose debts who lend umbrellas !

' And I should like to know how I'm to go to mother's without the umbrella ! Oh, don't tell me that I said I *would* go—that 's nothing to do with it ; nothing at all. She'll think I'm neglecting her, and the little money we were to have we sha'n't have at all—because we've no umbrella.

' The children, too ! Dear things ! They'll be sopping wet ; for they sha'n't stop at home—they sha'n't lose their learning ; it 's all their father will leave 'em, I'm sure. But they *shall* go to school. Don't tell me I said they shouldn't : you are so aggravating, Caudle ; you'd spoil the temper of an angel. They *shall* go to school ; mark that. And if they get their deaths of cold, it 's not my fault—I didn't lend the umbrella.'

' *At length*,' writes Caudle, ' *I fell asleep ; and dreamt that the sky was turned into green calico, with whalebone ribs ; that, in fact, the whole world turned round under a tremendous umbrella !* '

LECTURE VII

MR. CAUDLE HAS VENTURED A REMONSTRANCE ON HIS DAY'S DINNER: COLD MUTTON, AND NO PUDDING.—MRS. CAUDLE DEFENDS THE COLD SHOULDER

UMPH! I'm sure! Well! I wonder what it will be next? There 's nothing proper, now—nothing at all. Better get somebody else to keep the house, I think. I can't do it now, it seems; I'm only in the way here: I'd better take the children, and go.

'What am I grumbling about now? It 's very well for you to ask that! I'm sure I'd better be out of the world than—there now, Mr. Caudle; there you are again! I *shall* speak, sir. It isn't often I open my mouth, Heaven knows! But you like to hear nobody talk but yourself. You ought to have married a negro slave, and not any respectable woman.

'You're to go about the house looking like thunder all the day, and I'm not to say a word. Where do you think pudding 's to come from every day? You show a nice example to your children, you do; complaining, and turning your nose up at a sweet piece of cold mutton, because there 's no pudding! You go a nice way to make 'em extravagant—teach 'em nice lessons to begin the world with. Do you know what puddings cost; or do you think they fly in at the window?

'You hate cold mutton. The more shame for you, Mr. Caudle. I'm sure you've the stomach of a lord, you have. No, sir: I didn't choose to hash the mutton. It 's very easy for you to say hash it; but *I* know what a joint loses in hashing: it 's a day's dinner the less, if it 's a bit. Yes, I daresay; other people may have puddings with cold mutton. No doubt of it; and other

MR. CAUDLE DINES AT HOME. COLD MUTTON!

people become bankrupts. But if ever you get into the Gazette, it sha'n't be *my* fault—no; I'll do my duty as a wife to you, Mr. Caudle: you shall never have it to say that it was *my* housekeeping that brought you to beggary. No; you may sulk at the cold meat—ha! I hope you'll never live to want such a piece of cold

mutton as we had to-day ! and you may threaten to go to a tavern to dine ; but, with our present means, not a crumb of pudding do you get from me. You shall have nothing but the cold joint—nothing as I'm a Christian sinner.

'Yes ; there you are, throwing those fowls in my face again ! I know you once brought home a pair of fowls ; I know it : and weren't you mean enough to want to stop 'em out of my week's money ? Oh, the selfishness —the shabbiness of men ! They can go out and throw away pounds upon pounds with a pack of people who laugh at 'em afterwards ; but if it 's anything wanted for their own homes, their poor wives may hunt for it. I wonder you don't blush to name those fowls again ! I wouldn't be so little for the world, Mr. Caudle.

'What are you going to do ?

'*Going to get up ?*

'Don't make yourself ridiculous, Mr. Caudle ; I can't say a word to you like any other wife, but you must threaten to get up. *Do* be ashamed of yourself.

'Puddings, indeed ! Do you think I'm made of puddings ? Didn't you have some boiled rice three weeks ago ? Besides, is this the time of the year for puddings ? It 's all very well if I had money enough allowed me like any other wife to keep the house with : then, indeed, I might have preserves like any other woman ; now, it 's impossible ; and it 's cruel—yes, Mr. Caudle, cruel—of you to expect it.

'*Apples aren't so dear, are they ?*

'I know what apples are, Mr. Caudle, without your telling me. But I suppose you want something more than apples for dumplings ? I suppose sugar costs something, doesn't it ? And that 's how it is. That 's how one expense brings on another, and that 's how people go to ruin.

'*Pancakes ?*

'What 's the use of your lying muttering there about pancakes ? Don't you always have 'em once a year—every Shrove Tuesday ? And what would any moderate decent man want more ?

'Pancakes, indeed! Pray, Mr. Caudle,—no, it 's no use your saying fine words to me to let you go to sleep: I sha'n't!—pray do you know the price of eggs just now? There 's not an egg you can trust to under seven and eight a shilling; well, you've only just to reckon up how many eggs—don't lie swearing there at the eggs in that manner, Mr. Caudle; unless you expect the bed to

TOSSING THE PANCAKE

let you fall through. You call yourself a respectable tradesman, I suppose? Ha! I only wish people knew you as well as I do! Swearing at eggs, indeed! But I'm tired of this usage, Mr. Caudle; quite tired of it; and I don't care how soon it 's ended!

'I'm sure I do nothing but work and labour, and think how to make the most of everything; and this

is how I'm rewarded. I should like to see anybody whose joints go further than mine. But if I was to throw away your money into the street, or lay it out in fine feathers on myself, I should be better thought of. The woman who studies her husband and her family is always made a drudge of. It 's your fine fal-lal wives who've the best time of it.

'What 's the use of your lying groaning there in that manner ? That won't make me hold my tongue, I can tell you. You think to have it all your own way—but you won't, Mr. Caudle ! You can insult my dinner; look like a demon, I may say, at a wholesome piece of cold mutton—ah ! the thousands of far better creatures than you are who'd been thankful for that mutton !—and I'm never to speak ! But you're mistaken—I will. Your usage of me, Mr. Caudle, is infamous—unworthy of a man. I only wish people knew you for what you are ; but I've told you again and again they shall some day.

'Puddings ! And now I suppose I shall hear of nothing but puddings ! Yes, and I know what it would end in. First, you'd have a pudding every day—oh, I know your extravagance—then you'd go for fish,—then I shouldn't wonder if you'd have soup; turtle, no doubt: then you'd go for a dessert; and—oh ! I see it all as plain as the quilt before me—but no, not while I'm alive ! What your second wife may do I don't know; perhaps *she'll* be a fine lady ; but you sha'n't be ruined by me, Mr. Caudle ; that I'm determined. Puddings, indeed ! Pu-dding-s ! Pud——'

'*Exhausted nature,*' says Caudle, '*could hold out no longer. She went to sleep.*'

LECTURE VIII

CAUDLE HAS BEEN MADE A MASON—MRS. CAUDLE INDIGNANT AND CURIOUS

'WHAT 'S THE APRON FOR, MR. CAUDLE?'

NOW, Mr. Caudle—Mr. Caudle, I say: oh: you can't be asleep already, I know now, what I mean to say is this; there 's no use, none at all, in our having any disturbance about the matter; but, at last my mind 's made up, Mr. Caudle; I shall leave you. Either I know all you've been doing to-night, or to-morrow morning I quit the house. No, no; there 's an end of the marriage state, I think—an end of all confidence between man and wife—if a husband 's to have secrets and keep 'em all to himself. Pretty secrets they must be, when his own wife can't know 'em! Not fit for any decent person to know, I'm sure, if that 's the case. Now, Caudle, don't let us quarrel, there 's a good soul, tell me what it 's all about? A pack of nonsense, I dare say; still—not that I care much about it,—still I *should* like to know. There 's a dear. Eh: oh, don't tell me there 's nothing

in it: I know better. I'm not a fool, Mr. Caudle: I know there 's a good deal in it. Now, Caudle, just tell me a little bit of it. I'm sure I'd tell you anything. You know I would. Well ?

'Caudle, you're enough to vex a saint ! Now don't you think you're going to sleep ; because you're not. Do you suppose I'd ever suffered you to go and be made a mason, if I didn't suppose I was to know the secret too ? Not that it 's anything to know, I dare say ; and that 's why I'm determined to know it.

'But I know what it is ; oh yes, there can be no doubt. The secret is, to ill-use poor women ; to tyrannise over 'em ; to make 'em your slaves : especially your wives. It must be something of the sort, or you wouldn't be ashamed to have it known. What 's right and proper never need be done in secret. It 's an insult to a woman for a man to be a freemason, and let his wife know nothing of it. But, poor soul ! she 's sure to know it somehow—for nice husbands they all make. Yes, yes ; a part of the secret is to think better of all the world than their own wives and families. I'm sure men have quite enough to care for—that is, if they act properly—to care for them they have at home. They can't have much care to spare for the world besides.

'And I suppose they call you *Brother* Caudle ? A pretty brother, indeed ! Going and dressing yourself up in an apron like a turnpike man—for that 's what you look like. And I should like to know what the apron 's for ? There must be something in it not very respectable, I'm sure. Well, I only wish I was Queen for a day or two. I'd put an end to freemasonry, and all such trumpery, I know.

'Now, come, Caudle ; don't let 's quarrel. Eh ! You're not in pain, dear ? What 's it all about ? What are you lying laughing there at ? But I'm a fool to trouble my head about you.

'And you're not going to let me know the secret, eh ? You mean to say,—you're not ? Now, Caudle, you know it 's a hard matter to put me in a passion—not

that I care about the secret itself: no, I wouldn't give a button to know it, for it 's all nonsense, I'm sure. It isn't the secret I care about: it 's the slight, Mr. Caudle; it 's the studied insult that a man pays to his wife, when he thinks of going through the world keeping something

'LODGE, INDEED! NICE GOINGS ON, I DARE SAY'

to himself which he won't let her know. Man and wife one, indeed! I should like to know how that can be when a man's a mason—when he keeps a secret that sets him and his wife apart? Ha, you men make the

laws, and so you take good care to have all the best of 'em to yourselves: otherwise a woman ought to be allowed a divorce when a man becomes a mason: when he 's got a sort of corner-cupboard in his heart—a secret place in his mind—that his poor wife isn't allowed to rummage!

'Caudle, you sha'n't close your eyes for a week—no, you sha'n't—unless you tell me some of it. Come, there 's a good creature; there 's a love. I'm sure,

MR. AND MRS. CAUDLE

Caudle, I wouldn't refuse you anything—and you know it, or ought to know it by this time. I only wish I had a secret! To whom should I think of confiding it, but to my dear husband? I should be miserable to keep it to myself, and you know it. Now Caudle?

'Was there ever such a man? A man, indeed! A brute!—yes, Mr. Caudle, an unfeeling, brutal creature, when you might oblige me, and you won't. I'm sure I don't object to your being a mason: not at all, Caudle;

I dare say it 's a very good thing ; I dare say it is—it 's only your making a secret of it that vexes me. But you'll tell me—you'll tell your own Margaret ? You won't ! You're a wretch, Mr. Caudle.

' But I know why : oh, yes, I can tell. The fact is, you're ashamed to let me know what a fool they've been making of you. That 's it. You, at your time of life—the father of a family ! I should be ashamed of myself, Caudle.

' And I suppose you'll be going to what you call your Lodge every night, now. Lodge, indeed ! Pretty place it must be, where they don't admit women. Nice goings on, I dare say. Then you call one another brethren. Brethren ! I'm sure you'd relations enough, you didn't want any more.

' But I know what all this masonry 's about. It 's only an excuse to get away from your wives and families, that you may feast and drink together, that 's all. That 's the secret. And to abuse women,—as if they were inferior animals, and not to be trusted. That 's the secret ; and nothing else.

' Now, Caudle, don't let us quarrel. Yes, I know you're in pain. Still, Caudle, my love ; Caudle ! Dearest, I say ! Caudle ! '

' *I recollect nothing more*,' says Caudle, ' *for I had eaten a hearty supper, and somehow became oblivious.*'

LECTURE IX

MR. CAUDLE HAS BEEN TO GREENWICH FAIR

O, Mr. Caudle: I hope you enjoyed yourself at Greenwich.

'*How do I know you've been at Greenwich?*

'I know it very well, sir: know all about it: know more than you think I know. I thought there was something in the wind. Yes, I was sure of it, when you went out of the house to-day. I knew it by the looks of you, though *I* didn't say anything. Upon my word! And you call yourself a respectable man, and the father of a family! Going to a fair among all sorts of people,—at your time of life. Yes; and never think of taking your wife with you. Oh no! you can go and enjoy yourself out, with I don't know who: go out, and make yourself very pleasant, I dare say. Don't tell me; I hear what a nice companion Mr. Caudle is: what a good-tempered person. Ha! I only wish people could see you at home, that 's all. But so it is with men. They can keep all their good temper for out-of-doors—their wives never see any of it. Oh dear! I'm sure I don't know who'd be a poor woman!

'Now, Caudle, I'm not in an ill-temper; not at all. I know I used to be a fool when we were first married: I used to worry and fret myself to death when you went out; but I've got over that. I wouldn't put myself out of the way now for the best man that ever trod. For what thanks does a poor woman get? None at all. No: it 's those who don't care for their families who are the best thought of. I only wish I could bring myself not to care for mine.

'And why couldn't you say, like a man, you were going to Greenwich Fair when you went out? It 's no

use your saying that, Mr. Caudle: don't tell me that you didn't think of going; you'd made up your mind to it, and you know it. Pretty games you've had, no doubt! I should like to have been behind you, that 's all. A man at your time of life!

MR. CAUDLE HAS A WEAKNESS FOR GINGERBREAD NUTS

'And I, of course, I never want to go out. Oh no! I may stay at home with the cat. You wouldn't think of taking your wife and children, like any other decent man, to a fair. Oh no, you never care to be seen with

us. I'm sure, many people don't know you're married at all: how can they? Your wife's never seen with you. Oh no; anybody but those belonging to you!

'Greenwich Fair, indeed! Yes,—and of course you went up and down the hill, running and racing with nobody knows who. Don't tell me; I know what you are when you're out. You don't suppose, Mr. Caudle,

MR. CAUDLE AT THE FAIR

I've forgotten that pink bonnet, do you? No: I won't hold my tongue, and I'm not a foolish woman. It 's no matter, sir, if the pink bonnet was fifty years ago—it 's all the same for that. No: and if I live for fifty years to come, I never will leave off talking of it. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Mr. Caudle. Ha! few

wives would have been what I've been to you. I only wish my time was to come over again, that 's all; I wouldn't be the fool I have been.

'Going to a fair! and I supposc you had your fortune told by the gipsies? You needn't have wasted your money. I'm sure I can tell you your fortune if you go on as you do. Yes, the gaol will be your fortunc, Mr. Caudle. And it would be no matter—none at all—if your wife and children didn't suffer with you.

'And then you must go riding upon donkeys.

'*You didn't go riding upon donkeys?*

'Yes; it 's very well for you to say so: but I dare say you did. I tell you, Caudle, I know what you are when you're out. I wouldn't trust any of you—you especially, Caudle.

'Then you must go in the thick of the fair, and have the girls scratching your coat with rattles!

'*You couldn't help it, if they did scratch your coat?*

'Don't tell me; people don't scratch coats unless they're encouraged to do it. And you must go in a swing, too.

'*You didn't go in a swing?*

'Well, if you didn't it was no fault of yours; you wished to go I've no doubt.

'And then you must go into the shows? There,—you don't deny that. You did go into a show.

'*What of it, Mr. Caudle?*

'A good deal of it, sir. Nice crowding and squeezing in those shows, I know. Pretty places! And you a married man and the father of a family. No: I won't hold my tongue. It 's very well for you to threaten to get up. You're to go to Greenwich Fair, and race up and down the hill, and play at kiss in the ring. Pah! it 's disgusting, Mr. Caudle. Oh, I dare say you *did* play at it; if you didn't, you'd have liked, and that 's just as bad;—and you can go into swings, and shows, and roundabouts. If I was you, I should hide my head under the clothes and be ashamed of myself.

'And what is most selfish—most mean of you, Caudle—you can go and enjoy yourself, and never so

much as bring home for the poor children a gingerbread nut. Don't tell me that your pocket was picked of a pound of nuts! Nice company you must have been in to have your pocket picked.

'But I daresay I shall hear all about it to-morrow. I've no doubt, sir, you were dancing at the Crown and Anchor. I should like to have seen you. No: I'm not making myself ridiculous. It 's you that 's making yourself ridiculous; and everybody that knows you says so. Everybody knows what I have to put up with from you.

'Going to a fair, indeed! At your time——'

'*Here*,' says Caudle, '*I dozed off, hearing confusedly the words—hill—gipsies—rattles—roundabouts—swings—pink bonnet—nuts.*'

LECTURE X

ON MR. CAUDLE'S SHIRT-BUTTONS

HERE, Mr. Caudle, I hope you're in a little better temper than you were this morning? There—you needn't begin to whistle: people don't come to bed to whistle. But it 's like you. I can't speak, that you don't try to insult me. Once, I used to say you were the best creature living; now you get quite a fiend.

'*Do let you rest?*

'No: I won't let you rest. It 's the only time I have to talk to you, and you *shall* hear me. I'm put upon all day long: it 's very hard if I can't speak a word at night: besides, it isn't often I open my mouth, goodness knows.

'Because *once* in your lifetime your shirt wanted a button you must almost swear the roof off the house!

'*You didn't swear?*

'Ha, Mr. Caudle! you don't know what you do when you're in a passion.

'*You were not in a passion?*

'Weren't you? Well, then, I don't know what a passion is—and I think I ought by this time. I've lived long enough with you, Mr. Caudle, to know that.

'It 's a pity you haven't something worse to complain of than a button off your shirt. If you'd *some* wives, you would, I know. I'm sure I'm never without a needle and thread in my hand. What with you and the children, I'm made a perfect slave of. And what 's my thanks? Why, if once in your life a button 's off your shirt—what do you cry "*oh*" at?—I say once, Mr. Caudle; or twice, or three times, at most. I'm sure, Caudle, no man's buttons in the world are better looked after than yours. I only wish I had kept the shirts you had when you were first married! I should like to know where were your buttons then?

'Yes, it *is* worth talking of! But that 's how you always try to put me down. You fly into a rage, and then if I only try to speak you won't hear me. That 's how you men always will have all the talk to yourselves: a poor woman isn't allowed to get a word in.

'A nice notion you have of a wife, to suppose she 's nothing to think of but her husband's buttons. A pretty notion, indeed, you have of marriage. Ha! if poor women only knew what they had to go through. What with buttons, and one thing and another! They'd never tie themselves up,—no, not to the best man in the world, I'm sure.

'*What would they do, Mr. Caudle?*

'Why, do much better without you, I'm certain.

'And it 's my belief, after all, that the button wasn't off the shirt; it 's my belief that you pulled it off, that you might have something to talk about. Oh, you're aggravating enough, when you like, for anything! All I know is, it 's very odd that the button should be off

the shirt; for I'm sure no woman 's a greater slave to her husband's buttons than I am. I only say, it 's very odd.

'However, there 's one comfort; it can't last long. I'm worn to death with your temper, and sha'n't trouble you a great while. Ha, you may laugh! And I dare say you would laugh! I've no doubt of it! That 's your

MR. CAUDLE FINDS A BUTTON OFF HIS SHIRT

love—that 's your feeling! I know that I'm sinking every day, though I say nothing about it. And when I'm gone, we shall see how your second wife will look after your buttons. You'll find out the difference, then. Yes, Caudle, you'll think of me, then; for then, I hope, you'll never have a blessed button to your back.

'No, I'm not a vindictive woman, Mr. Caudle; nobody ever called me that, but you. What do you say?

'*Nobody ever knew so much of me?*

'That 's nothing at all to do with it. Ha! I wouldn't have your aggravating temper, Caudle, for mines of gold. It 's a good thing I'm not as worrying as you are—or a nice house there'd be between us. I only wish you'd had a wife that *would* have talked to you! Then you'd have known the difference. But you impose upon me, because, like a poor fool, I say nothing. I should be ashamed of myself, Caudle.

'And a pretty example you set as a father! You'll make your boys as bad as yourself. Talking as you did all breakfast time about your buttons! And of a Sunday morning, too! And you call yourself a Christian I should like to know what your boys will say of you when they grow up? And all about a paltry button off one of your wristbands! A decent man wouldn't have mentioned it.

'*Why won't I hold my tongue?*

'Because I *won't* hold my tongue. I'm to have my peace of mind destroyed—I'm to be worried into my grave for a miserable shirt button, and I'm to hold my tongue! Oh! but that 's just like you men!

'But I know what I'll do for the future. Every button you have may drop off, and I won't so much as put a thread to 'em. And I should like to know what you'll do then? Oh, you must get somebody else to sew 'em, must you? That 's a pretty threat for a husband to hold out to a wife! And to such a wife as I've been, too: such a negro-slave to your buttons, as I may say! Somebody else to sew 'em, eh? No, Caudle, no: not while I'm alive! When I'm dead—and with what I have to bear there's no knowing how soon that may be—when I'm dead, I say—oh! what a brute you must be to snore so!

'*You're not snoring?*

'Ha! that 's what you always say; but that 's nothing to do with it. You must get somebody else to sew 'em, must you? Ha! I shouldn't wonder. Oh

no ! I should be surprised at nothing, now ! Nothing at all ! It 's what people have always told me it would come to,—and now the buttons have opened my eyes ! But the whole world shall know of your eruelty, Mr. Caudle. After the wife I've been to you. Somebody else, indeed, to sew your buttons ! I'm no longer to be mistress in my own house ! Ha, Caudle ! I wouldn't have upon my eonscienee what you have, for the world ! I wouldn't treat anybody as you treat—no, I'm not mad ! It 's you, Mr. Caudle, who are mad, or bad—and that 's worse ! I ean't even so mueh as speak of a shirt button, but that I'm threatened to be made nobody of in my own house ! Caudle, you've a heart like a hearth-stone, you have ! To threaten me, and only beeause a button—a button——'

'*I was conscious of no more than this*,' says Caudle ; '*for here nature relieved me with a sweet, deep sleep*.'

LECTURE XI

MRS. CAUDLE SUGGESTS THAT HER DEAR MOTHER SHOULD 'COME AND LIVE WITH THEM'

MR. CAUDLE AND HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW

IS your cold better to-night, Caudle? Yes; I thought it was. 'Twill be quite well to-morrow, I dare say. There 's a love! You don't take care enough of yourself, Caudle, you don't. And you ought, I'm sure, if only for my sake. For whatever I should do, if anything was to happen to you—but I won't think of it; no, I can't bear to think of *that*. Still, you ought to take care of yourself; for you know you're not strong, Caudle; you know you're not.

'Wasn't dear mother so happy with us to-night? Now, you needn't go to sleep so suddenly. I say, wasn't she so happy?

'*You don't know?*

'How can you say you don't know? You must have seen it. But she is always happier here than anywhere else. Ha! what a temper that dear soul has!

I call it a temper of satin ; it is so smooth, so easy, and so soft. Nothing puts her out of the way. And then, if you only knew how she takes your part, Caudle ! I'm sure, if you had been her own son ten times over, she couldn't be fonder of you. Don't you think so, Caudle ? Eh, love ? Now, do answer.

'*How can you tell ?*

'Nonsense, Caudle ; you must have seen it. I'm sure nothing delights the dear soul so much as when she 's thinking how to please you.

'Don't you remember Thursday night, the stewed oysters when you came home ? That was all dear mother's doings ! "Margaret," says she to me, "it 's a cold night ; and don't you think dear Mr. Caudle would like something nice before he goes to bed ?" And that, Caudle, is how the oysters came about. Now, don't sleep, Caudle : do listen to me for five minutes ; 'tisn't often I speak, goodness knows.

'And then, what a fuss she makes when you are out, if your slippers aren't put to the fire for you.

'*She 's very good ?*

'Yes,—I know she is, Caudle. And hasn't she been six months—though I promised her not to tell you—six months working a watch-pocket for you ! And with *her* eyes, dear soul—and at *her* time of life !

'And then what a cook she is ! I'm sure the dishes she'll make out of next to nothing ! I try hard enough to follow her : but, I'm not ashamed to own it, Caudle, she quite beats me. Ha ! the many nice little things she'd simmer up for you—and I can't do it ; the children, you know it, Caudle, take so much of my time. I can't do it, love ; and I often reproach myself that I can't. Now, you sha'n't go to sleep, Caudle ; at least not for five minutes. You must hear me.

'I've been thinking dearest—ha ! that nasty cough, love !—I've been thinking, darling, if we could only persuade dear mother to come and live with us. Now, Caudle, you can't be asleep ; it 's impossible—you were coughing only this minute—yes, to live with us. What a treasure we should have in her ! Then, Caudle, you

never need go to bed without something nice and hot. And you want it, Caudle.

'*You don't want it?*

'Nonsense, you do; for you're not strong, Caudle; you know you're not.

MRS. CAUDLE'S DEAR MOTHER

'I'm sure, the money she'd save us in housekeeping. Ha! what an eye she has for a joint! The butcher doesn't walk that could deceive dear mother. And then, again, for poultry! What a finger and thumb she

has for a chicken! I never could market like her: it 's a gift—quite a gift.

'And then you recollect her marrow-puddings?

'*You don't recollect 'em?*

'Oh, fie! Caudle, how often have you flung her marrow puddings in my face, wanting to know why I couldn't make 'em? And I wouldn't pretend to do it after dear mother. I should think it presumption. Now, love, if she was only living with us—come, you're not asleep, Caudle—if she was only living with us, you could have marrow puddings every day. Now, don't fling yourself about and begin to swear at marrow puddings; you know you like 'em, dear.

'What a hand, too, dear mother has for a pie crust! But it 's born with some people. What do you say?

'*Why wasn't it born with me?*

'Now, Caudle, that 's cruel—unfeeling of you; I wouldn't have uttered such a reproach to you for the whole world. Consider, dear; people can't be born as they like.

'How often, too, have you wanted to brew at home! And I never could learn anything about brewing. But, ha! what ale dear mother makes!

'*You never tasted it?*

'No, I know that. But I recollect the ale we used to have at home: and father would never drink wine after it. The best sherry was nothing like it.

'*You dare say not?*

'No; it wasn't indeed, Caudle. Then, if dear mother was only with us, what money we should save in beer! And then you might always have your own nice pure, good, wholesome ale, Caudle; and what good it would do you! For you're not strong, Caudle.

'And then dear mother's jams and preserves, love! I own it, Caudle; it has often gone to my heart that with cold meat you haven't always had a pudding. Now if mother was with us, in the matter of fruit puddings she'd make it summer all the year round. But I never could preserve—now mother does it, and

for next to no money whatever. What nice dogs-in-a-blanket she'd make for the children!

'*What's dogs-in-a-blanket?*

'Oh, they're delicious—as dear mother makes 'em.

'Now, you *have* tasted her Irish stew, Caudle? You remember that? Come, you're not asleep—you remember that? And how fond you are of it! And I know I never have it made to please you! Well, what a relief to me it would be if dear mother was always at hand, that you might have a stew when you liked. What a load it would be off my mind.

'Again, for pickles! Not at all like anybody else's pickles. Her red cabbage—why, it's as crisp as biscuit! And then her walnuts—and her all-sorts! Eh, Caudle? You know how you love pickles; and how we sometimes tiff about 'em? Now if dear mother was here, a word would never pass between us. And I'm sure nothing would make me happier, for—you're not asleep, Caudle?—for I can't bear to quarrel, can I, love?

'The children, too, are so fond of her! And she'd be such a help to me with 'em! I'm sure, with dear mother in the house, I shouldn't care a fig for measles, or anything of the sort. As a nurse, she's such a treasure!

'And at her time of life, what a needle-woman! And the darning and mending for the children, it really gets quite beyond me now, Caudle. Now with mother at my hand, there wouldn't be a stitch wanted in the house.

'And then, when you're out late, Caudle—for I know you must be out late sometimes: I can't expect you, of course, to be always at home—why then dear mother could sit up for you, and nothing would delight the dear soul half so much.

'And so, Caudle, love, I think dear mother had better come, don't you? Eh, Caudle? Now, you're not asleep, darling; don't you think she'd better come? You say *No?*

'You say *No* again? *You won't have her,* you say?

'*You won't, that 's flat?*
'Caudle—Cau-Cau-dle—Cau—dle——'

'*Here Mrs. Caudle,*' says her husband, '*suddenly went into tears; and I went to sleep.*'

LECTURE XII

MR. CAUDLE HAVING COME HOME A LITTLE LATE, DECLARES THAT HENCEFORTH 'HE WILL HAVE A KEY'

ON my word, Mr. Caudle, I think it a waste of time to come to bed at all now! The cocks will be crowing in a minute. Keeping people up till past twelve. Oh yes! you're thought a man of very fine feelings out of doors, I dare say! It 's a pity you haven't a little feeling for those belonging to you at home. A nice hour to keep people out of their beds!

'*Why did I sit up then?*

'Because I chose to sit up—but that 's my thanks. No, it 's no use your talking, Caudle; I never *will* let the girl sit up for you, and there 's an end. What do you say?

'*Why does she sit up with me then?*

'That 's quite a different matter: you don't suppose I'm going to sit up alone, do you? What do you say?

'*What 's the use of two sitting up?*

'That 's my business. No, Caudle, it 's no such thing. I *don't* sit up because I may have the pleasure of talking about it; and you're an ungrateful, unfeeling

MR. CAUDLE HASN'T A LATCHKEY

creature to say so. I sit up because I choose it; and if you don't come home all the night long—and 'twill soon come to that, I've no doubt—still, I'll never go to bed, so don't think it.

'Oh, yes! the time runs away very pleasantly with you men at your clubs—selfish creatures! You can

laugh and sing, and tell stories, and never think of the clock; never think there 's such a person as a wife belonging to you. It 's nothing to you that a poor woman 's sitting up, and telling the minutes, and seeing all sorts of things in the fire—and sometimes thinking something dreadful has happened to you—more fool she to care a straw about you!—This is all nothing. Oh no; when a woman 's once married she 's a slave—worse than a slave—and must bear it all!

'And what you men can find to talk about I can't think! Instead of a man sitting every night at home with his wife, and going to bed at a Christian hour,—going to a club, to meet a set of people who don't care a button for him—it 's monstrous! What do you say?

'*You only go once a week?*

'That 's nothing at all to do with it: you might as well go every night: and I daresay you will soon. But if you do, you may get in as you can: *I* won't sit up for you, I can tell you.

'My health 's being destroyed night after night, and—oh, don't say it 's only once a week; I tell you that 's nothing to do with it—if you had any eyes, you would see how ill I am; but you've no eyes for anybody belonging to you: oh no! your eyes are for people out of doors. It 's very well for you to call me a foolish, aggravating woman! I should like to see the woman who'd sit up for you as I do.

'*You didn't want me to sit up?*

'Yes, yes; that 's your thanks—that 's your gratitude: I'm to ruin my health, and to be abused for it. Nice principles you've got at that club, Mr. Caudle!

'But there 's one comfort—one great comfort; it can't last long: I'm sinking—I feel it, though I never say anything about it—but I know my own feelings, and I say it can't last long. And then I should like to know who will sit up for you! Then I should like to know how your second wife—what do you say?

'*You'll never be troubled with another?*

'Troubled, indeed! *I* never troubled you, Caudle. No; it 's you who've troubled me; and you know it;

though like a foolish woman I've borne it all, and never said a word about it. But it *can't* last—that 's one blessing!

'Oh, if a woman could only know what she'd have to suffer before she was married.—Don't tell me you want to go to sleep! If you want to go to sleep, you should come home at proper hours! It 's time to get up, for what I know, now. Shouldn't wonder if you hear the milk in five minutes—there 's the sparrows up already; yes, I say the sparrows; and, Caudle, you ought to blush to hear 'em.

'*You don't hear 'em?*

'Ha! you won't hear 'em, you mean: *I* hear 'em. No, Mr. Caudle; it *isn't* the wind whistling in the key-hole; I'm not quite foolish, though you may think so. I hope I know wind from a sparrow!

'Ha! when I think what a man you were before we were married! But you're now another person—quite an altered creature. But I suppose you're all alike—I dare say, every poor woman 's troubled and put upon, though I should hope not so much as I am. Indeed, I should hope not! Going and staying out, and——

'What!

'*You'll have a key?*

'Will you? Not while I'm alive, Mr. Caudle. I'm not going to bed with the door upon the latch for you or the best man breathing.

'*You won't have a latch—you'll have a Chubb's lock?*

'Will you? I'll have no Chubb here, I can tell you. What do you say?

'*You'll have the lock put on to-morrow?*

'Well, try it; that 's all I say, Caudle; try it. I won't let you put me in a passion; but all I say is,—try it.

'A respectable thing, that, for a married man to carry about with him,—a street-door key! That tells a tale I think. A nice thing for the father of a family! A key! What, to let yourself in and out when you please! To come in, like a thief in the middle of the night, instead of knocking at the door like a decent person!

Oh, don't tell me that you only want to prevent me sitting up—if I choose to sit up what 's that to you ? Some wives, indeed, would make a noise about sitting up, but *you've* no reason to complain—goodness knows !

' Well, upon my word, I've lived to hear something.

' WHAT 'S IT TO YOU, IF I LIKE TO SIT UP ? '

Carry the street-door key about with you ! I've heard of such things with young good-for-nothing bachelors, with nobody to care what became of 'em ; but for a married man to leave his wife and children in a house

with a door upon the latch—don't talk to me about Chubb, it 's all the same—a great deal you must care for us. Yes, it 's very well for you to say that you only want the key for peace and quietness—what 's it to you, if I like to sit up ? You've no business to complain ; it can't distress you. Now, it's no use your talking ; all I say is this, Caudle : if you send a man to put on any lock here, I'll call in a policeman ; as I'm your married wife, I will.

'No, I think when a man comes to have the street-door key, the sooner he turns bachelor altogether the better. I'm sure, Caudle, I don't want to be any clog upon you. Now, it 's no use your telling me to hold my tongue, for I—What ?

'*I give you the headache, do I ?*

'No, I don't, Caudle ; it's your club that gives you the headache ; it 's your smoke, and your—well ! if ever I knew such a man in all my life ! there 's no saying a word to you ! You go out, and treat yourself like an emperor—and come home at twelve at night, or any hour for what I know, and then you threaten to have a key, and—and—and——'

'*I* did *get to sleep at last,*' says Caudle, '*amidst the falling sentences of "take children into a lodging"—"separate maintenance"—"won't be made a slave of"—and so forth.*'

LECTURE XIII

MRS. CAUDLE HAS BEEN TO SEE HER DEAR MOTHER.—CAUDLE, ON THE 'JOYFUL OCCASION,' HAS GIVEN A PARTY, AND ISSUED A CARD OF INVITATION

'YES, CORKED WHISKERS ON HER DEAR FACE'

'IT *is* hard, I think, Mr. Caudle, that I can't leave home for a day or two, but the house must be turned into a tavern: a tavern? —a pot-house! Yes, I thought you were very anxious that I should go; I thought you wanted to get rid of me for something, or you would not have insisted on my staying at dear mother's all night. You were afraid I should get cold coming home, were you? Oh, yes, you can be very tender, you can, Mr. Caudle, when it suits your own purpose. Yes! and the world thinks what a good husband you are! I only wish the world knew you as well as I do, that 's all; but it shall, some day, I'm determined.

'I'm sure the house will not be sweet for a month. All the curtains are poisoned with smoke; and what 's more, with the filthiest smoke I ever knew.

'*Take 'em down, then?*

'Yes, it 's all very well for you to say take 'em down; but they were only cleaned and put up a month ago; but a careful wife 's lost upon you, Mr. Caudle. You ought to have married somebody who'd have let your house go to wreck and ruin, as I will for the future. People who don't care for their families are better thought of than those who do; I've long found out *that.*

Mr. Caudle's *compliments to Mr.* Henry Prettyman, *and expects to have the honour of his company on this joyful occasion, at half-past Eight o'Clock.*

'And what a condition the carpet 's in! They've taken five pounds out of it, if a farthing, with their filthy boots, and I don't know what besides. And then the smoke in the hearthrug, and a large cinder-hole burnt in it! I never saw such a house in *my* life! If you wanted to have a few friends, why couldn't you invite 'em when your wife 's at home, like any other man? not have 'em sneaking in, like a set of housebreakers,

directly a woman turns her back. They must be pretty gentlemen, they must; mean fellows, that are afraid to face a woman! Ha! and you all call yourselves the lords of the creation! I should only like to see what would become of the creation, if you were left to yourselves! A pretty pickle creation would be in very soon!

MR. CAUDLE HAS INVITED A FEW FRIENDS TO SUPPER

'You must all have been in a nice condition! What do you say?

'*You took nothing?*

'Took nothing, didn't you? I'm sure there 's such a regiment of empty bottles, I haven't had the heart to count 'em. And punch, too! you must have punch!

There 's a hundred half-lemons in the kitchen, if there 's one : for Susan, like a good girl, kept 'em to show 'em me. No, sir ; Susan *sha'n't leave the house !* What do you say ?

' *She has no right to tell tales, and you* WILL *be master in your own house ?*

' Will you ? If you don't alter, Mr. Caudle, you'll soon have no house to be master of. A whole loaf of sugar did I leave in the cupboard, and now there isn't as much as would fill a teacup. Do you suppose I'm to find sugar for punch for fifty men ? What do you say ?

' *There wasn't fifty ?*

' That 's no matter ; the more shame for 'em, sir. I'm sure they drank enough for fifty. Do you suppose I'm to find sugar for punch for all the world out of my housekeeping money ?

' *You don't ask me ?*

' Don't you ask me ? You do ; you know you do : for if I only want a shilling extra, the house is in a blaze. And yet a whole loaf of sugar can you throw away upon—No, I *won't* be still ; and I *won't* let you go to sleep. If you'd got to bed at a proper hour last night, you wouldn't have been so sleepy now. You can sit up half the night with a pack of people who don't care for you, and your poor wife can't get in a word !

' And there 's that china image that I had when I was married—I wouldn't have taken any sum of money for it, and you know it—and how do I find it ? With its precious head knocked off ! And what was more mean, more contemptible than all besides, it was put on again, as if nothing had happened.

' *You knew nothing about it ?*

' Now, how can you lie there, in your Christian bed, Caudle, and say that ? You know that that fellow, Prettyman, knocked off the head with the poker ! You know that he did. And you hadn't the feeling—yes, I will say it—you hadn't the feeling to protect what you knew was precious to me. Oh no, if the truth was known, you were glad to see it broken for that very reason.

'Every way I've been insulted. I should like to know who it was who corked whiskers on my dear aunt's picture? Oh! you're laughing, are you?

'*You're not laughing?*

'Don't tell me that. I should like to know what shakes the bed, then, if you're not laughing? Yes, corked whiskers on her dear face,—and she was a dear soul to you, Caudle, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself to see her ill-used. Oh, you may laugh! It 's very easy to laugh! I only wish you'd a little feeling, like other people, that 's all.

'Then there 's my china mug—the mug I had before I was married—when I was a happy creature. I should like to know who knocked the spout off that mug? Don't tell me it was cracked before—it 's no such thing, Caudle; there wasn't a flaw in it—and now,. I could have cried when I saw it. Don't tell me it wasn't worth twopence. How do you know? You never buy mugs. But that 's like men; they think nothing in a house costs anything.

'There 's four glasses broke, and nine cracked. At least, that 's all I've found out at present; but I dare-say I shall discover a dozen to-morrow.

'And I should like to know where the cotton umbrella's gone to—and I should like to know who broke the bell-pull—and perhaps you don't know there 's a leg off a chair,—and perhaps——'

'*I was resolved*,' said Caudle, '*to know nothing, and so went to sleep in my ignorance.*'

LECTURE XIV

MRS. CAUDLE THINKS IT 'HIGH TIME' THAT THE CHILDREN SHOULD HAVE SUMMER CLOTHING

'THERE, Caudle! If there 's anything in the world I hate—and you know it, Caudle—it is asking you for money. I am sure for myself, I'd rather go without a thing a thousand times, and I do—the more shame of you to let me, but—there, now! there you fly out again!

'*What do I want now?*

'Why, you must know what's wanted, if you'd any eyes—or any pride for your children, like any other father.

'*What 's the matter—and what am I driving at?*

'Oh, nonsense, Caudle! As if you didn't know! I'm sure if I'd any money of my own, I'd never ask you for a farthing; never; it 's painful to me, goodness knows! What do you say?

'*If it 's painful, why so often do it?*

'Ha! I suppose you call that a joke—one of your club jokes? I wish you'd think a little more of people's feelings, and less of your jokes. As I say, I only wish I'd any money of my own. If there is anything that humbles a poor woman, it is coming to a man's pocket for every farthing. It 's dreadful!

'Now, Caudle, if ever you kept awake, you shall keep awake to-night—yes, you shall hear me, for it isn't often I speak, and then you may go to sleep as soon as you like. Pray do you know what month it is? And did you see how the children looked at church to-day—like nobody else's children?

'*What was the matter with them?*

'Oh, Caudle! How can you ask? Poor things! weren't they all in their thick merinos and beaver bonnets? What do you say?——

'*What of it?*

'What! you'll tell me that you didn't see how the

'THE TWENTY POUNDS I WILL HAVE, MR. CAUDLE, IF I'VE ANY'

Briggs's girls, in their new chips, turned their noses up at 'em? And you didn't see how the Browns looked at the Smiths, and then at our dear girls, as much as to say, "Poor creatures! what figures for the month of May!"

'*You didn't see it?*

'The more shame for you—you would, if you'd had the feelings of a parent—but I'm sorry to say, Caudle, you haven't. I'm sure those Briggs's girls—the little minxes!—put me into such a pucker, I could have pulled their ears for 'em over the pew. What do you say?

'*I ought to be ashamed of myself to own it?*

'No, Mr. Caudle; the shame lies with you, that don't let your children appear at church like other people's children, that make 'em uncomfortable at their devotions, poor things! for how can it be otherwise, when they see themselves dressed like nobody else?

'Now, Caudle, it 's no use talking; those children shall not cross the threshold next Sunday, if they haven't things for the summer. Now mind—they sha'n't; and there 's an end of it. I won't have 'em exposed to the Briggs's and the Browns again: no, they shall know they have a mother, if they've no father to feel for 'em. What do you say, Caudle?

'*A good deal I must think of church, if I think so much of what we go in?*

'I only wish you thought as much as I do, you'd be a better man than you are, Caudle, I can tell you; but that 's nothing to do with it. I'm talking about decent clothes for the children for the summer, and you want to put me off with something about the church; but that 's so like you, Caudle!

'*I'm always wanting money for clothes?*

'How can you lie in your bed and say that? I'm sure there 's no children in the world that cost their father so little: but that 's it; the less a poor woman does upon, the less she may. It 's the wives who don't care where the money comes from who're best thought of. Oh, if my time was to come over again, would I mend and stitch, and make the things go so far as I have done? No—that I wouldn't. Yes, it 's very well for you to lie there and laugh; it 's easy to laugh, Caudle—very easy, to people who don't feel.

'Now, Caudle, dear! What a man you are! I know

you'll give me the money, because, after all, I think you love your children, and like to see 'em well dressed. It 's only natural that a father should. Eh, Caudle, eh? Now you sha'n't go to sleep till you've told me.

'*How much money do I want?*

'Why, let me see, love. There 's Caroline, and Jane, and Susannah, and Mary Anne, and—What do you say?

MR. AND MRS. CAUDLE AT CHURCH

'*I needn't count 'em; you know how many there are?*

'Ha! that 's just as you take me up. Well, how much money will it take? Let me see; and don't go to sleep. I'll tell you in a minute. You always love to see the dear things like new pins, I know that, Caudle; and though I say it—bless their little hearts! they do credit to you, Caudle. Any nobleman of the land

might be proud of 'em. Now don't swear at noblemen of the land, and ask me what they've to do with your children; you know what I meant. But you *are* so hasty, Caudle.

'*How much?*

'Now, don't be in a hurry! Well, I think, with good pinching—and you know, Caudle, there 's never a wife who can pinch closer than I can—I think, with pinching, I can do with twenty pounds. What did you say?

'*Twenty fiddlesticks?*

'What?

'*You won't give half the money?*

'Very well, Mr. Caudle; I don't care: let the children go in rags; let them stop from church, and grow up like heathens and cannibals, and then you'll save your money, and, I suppose, be satisfied.

'*You gave me twenty pounds five months ago?*

'What 's five months ago to do with now? Besides, what I *have* had is nothing to do with it.

'What do you say?

'*Ten pounds are enough?*

'Yes, just like you men; you think things cost nothing for women; but you don't care how much you lay out upon yourselves.

'*They only want bonnets and frocks?*

'How do you know what they want? *How* should a man know anything at all about it? And you won't give more than ten pounds? Very well. Then you may go shopping with it yourself, and see what *you'll* make of it. I'll have none of your ten pounds, I can tell you. No, sir,—no; you have no cause to say that.

'*I don't want to dress the children up like countesses?*

'You often fling that in my teeth, you do: but you know it 's false, Caudle; you know it. I only want to give 'em proper notions of themselves: and what, indeed *can* the poor things think when they see the Briggs's, and the Browns, and the Smiths—and their fathers don't make the money you do, Caudle—when they see them as fine as tulips? Why, they must think themselves

nobody; and to think yourself nobody—depend upon it, Caudle,—isn't the way to make the world think anything of you.

'What do you say?

'*Where did I pick up that?*

'Where do you think? I know a great deal more than you suppose—yes; though you don't give me credit for it. Husbands seldom do. However, the twenty pounds I *will* have, if I've any—or not a farthing.

'No, sir, no.

'*I don't want to dress up the children like peacocks and parrots!*

'I only want to make 'em respectable and—what do you say?

'*You'll give fifteen pounds?*

'No, Caudle, no—not a penny will I take under twenty; if I did, it would seem as if I wanted to waste your money: and I'm sure, when I come to think of it, twenty pounds will hardly do. Still, if you'll give me twenty,—no it 's no use your offering fifteen, and wanting to go to sleep, You sha'n't close an eye until you promise me twenty. Come, Caudle, love!—twenty, and then you may go to sleep. Twenty—twenty—twenty——'

'*My impression is,*' writes Caudle, '*that I fell asleep sticking firmly to the fifteen; but in the morning Mrs. Caudle assured me, as a woman of honour, that she wouldn't let me wink an eye before I promised the twenty: and man is frail—and woman is strong—she had the money.*'

LECTURE XV

MR. CAUDLE HAS AGAIN STAYED OUT LATE. MRS. CAUDLE, AT FIRST INJURED AND VIOLENT, MELTS

PERHAPS, Mr. Caudle, you'll tell me where this is to end? Though, goodness knows, I needn't ask *that*. The end is plain enough. Out—out—out! Every night—every night! I'm sure, men who can't come home at reasonable hours have no business with wives: they have no right to destroy other people, if they choose to go to destruction themselves. Ha, lord! Oh, dear! I only hope none of my girls will ever marry—I hope they'll none of 'em ever be the slave their poor mother is: they sha'n't, if I can help it. What do you say?

'*Nothing?*

'Well, I don't wonder at that, Mr. Caudle? you ought to be ashamed to speak; I don't wonder that you can't open your mouth. I'm only astonished that at such hours you have the confidence to knock at your own door. Though I'm your wife, I must say it, I do sometimes wonder at your impudence. What do you say?

'*Nothing?*

'Ha! you are an aggravating creature, Caudle; lying there like the mummy of a man, and never as much as opening your lips to one. Just as if your own wife wasn't worth answering! It isn't so when you're out I'm sure. Oh no! then you can talk fast enough; here, there 's no getting a word from you. But you treat your wife as no other man does—and you know it.

'Out—out every night! What?

'*You haven't been out this week before?*

'That 's nothing at all to do with it. You might just as well be out all the week as once—just! And I should like to know what could keep you out till these hours?

'*Business?*

'Oh, yes—I dare say! Pretty business a married man and the father of a family must have out of doors at one in the morning. What?

'*I shall drive you mad?*

'Oh, no; you haven't feelings enough to go mad—you'd be a better man, Caudle, if you had.

'*Will I listen to you?*

'What 's the use? Of course you've some story to put me off with—you can all do that, and laugh at us afterwards.

'No Caudle, don't say that. I'm not always trying to find fault—not I. It 's you. I never speak but when there 's occasion; and what in my time I've put up with there isn't anybody in the world that knows.

'*Will I hear your story?*

'Oh, you may tell it if you please; go on: only mind, I shan't believe a word of it. I'm not such a fool as other women are, I can tell you.

'There, now—don't begin to swear—but go on——

'——And that 's your story, is it? That 's your excuse for the hours you keep! That 's your apology for undermining my health and ruining your family! What do you think your children will say of you when they grow up—going and throwing away your money upon good-for-nothing pot-house acquaintance?

'*He 's not a pot-house acquaintance?*

'Who is he, then? Come, you haven't told me that; but I know—it 's that Prettyman! Yes, to be sure it is! Upon my life—it 's that Prettyman! Yes, to be sure it is! Upon my life! Well, if I've hardly patience to lie

MR. CAUDLE IS CALLED TO A SPONGING-HOUSE

in the bed! I've wanted a silver teapot these five years, and you must go and throw away as much money as—what?

'*You haven't thrown it away?*

'Haven't you? Then my name 's not Margaret, that 's all I know!

'A man gets arrested, and because he 's taken from his wife and family, and locked up, you must go and trouble your head with it! And you must be mixing yourself up with nasty sheriff's officers—pah! I'm sure you're not fit to enter a decent house—and go running from lawyer to lawyer to get bail, and settle the business, as you call it! A pretty settlement you'll make of it—mark my words! Yes—and to mend the matter, to

MR. CAUDLE HAS A MIDNIGHT VISITOR

finish it quite, you must be one of the bail! That any man who isn't a born fool should do such a thing for another! do you think anybody would do as much for you?

'*Yes?*

'You say yes? Well, I only wish—just to show that I'm right—I only wish you were in a condition to try

'cm. I should only like to see you arrested. You'd find the difference—*that* you would.

'What 's other people's affairs to you ? If you were locked up, depend upon it, there 's not a soul would come near you. No ; it 's all very fine now, when people think there isn't a chance of your being in trouble—but I should only like to see what they'd say to you if *you* were in a sponging-house. Yes—I should enjoy *that*, just to show you that I'm always right. What do you say ?

'*You think better of the world ?*

'Ha ! that would be all very well if you could afford it ; but you're not in means, I know, to think so well of people as all that. And of course they only laugh at you. "Caudle 's an easy fool," they cry—I know it as well as if I heard 'em—"Caudle 's an easy fool ; anybody may lead him." Yes ; anybody but his own wife ;—and she—of course—is nobody.

'And now, everybody that 's arrested will of course send to you. Yes, Mr. Caudle, you'll have your hands full now, no doubt of it. You'll soon know every sponging-house and every sheriff's officer in London. Your business will have to take care of itself ; you'll have enough to do to run from lawyer to lawyer after the business of other people. Now, it 's no use calling me a dear soul—not a bit ! No ; and I sha'n't put it off till to-morrow. It isn't often I speak, but I *will* speak now.

'I wish that Prettyman had been at the bottom of the sea before—what ?

'*It isn't Prettyman ?*

'Ah ! it's very well for you to say so ; but I know it is ; it 's just like him. He looks like a man that 's always in debt—that's always in a sponging-house. Anybody might swear it. I knew it from the very first time you brought him here—from the very night he put his nasty dirty wet boots on my bright steel fender. Any woman could see what the fellow was in a minute. Prettyman ! a pretty gentleman, truly, to be robbing your wife and family !

'Why couldn't you let him stop in the sponging—— Now don't call upon heaven in that way, and ask me to be quiet, for I won't. Why couldn't you let him stop there? He got himself in; he might have got himself out again. And you must keep me awake, ruin my sleep, my health, and for what you care, my peace of mind. Ha! everybody but you can see how I'm breaking. You can do all this while you're talking with a set of low bailiffs! A great deal you must think of your children to go into a lawyer's office.

'And then you must be bail—you must be bound—for Mr. Prettyman! You may say, bound! Yes—you've your hands nicely tied, now. How he laughs at you—and serve you right! Why, in another week he'll be in the East Indies; of course he will! And you'll have to pay his debts; yes, your children may go in rags, so that Mr. Prettyman—what do you say?

'*It isn't Prettyman?*

'I know better. Well, if it isn't Prettyman that's kept you out,—if it isn't Prettyman you're bail for—who is it, then? I ask, who is it, then? What?

'*My brother? Brother Tom?*

'Oh, Caudle! dear Caudle——'

'*It was too much for the poor soul,*' says Caudle; '*she sobbed as if her heart would break, and I*——' and here the MS. is blotted, as though Caudle himself had dropped tears as he wrote.

LECTURE XVI

BABY IS TO BE CHRISTENED; MRS. CAUDLE CANVASSES THE MERITS OF PROBABLE GODFATHERS

COME now, love, about baby's name? The dear thing 's three months old, and not a name to its back yet. There you go again! Talk of it to-morrow! No we'll talk of it to-night. There 's no having a word with you in the daytime — but here you can't leave me. Now don't say you wish you could, Caudle; that 's unkind, and not treating a wife—especially the wife I am to you—as she deserves. It isn't often that I speak; but I *do* believe you'd like never to hear the sound of my voice. I might as well have been born dumb!

'I suppose the baby *must* have a godfather; and so, Caudle, who shall we have? Who do you think will be able to do the most for it? No, Caudle, no; I'm not a selfish woman—nothing of the sort—but I hope I've the feelings of a mother; and what 's the use of a godfather, if he gives nothing else to the child but a name? A child might almost as well not be christened at all. And so who shall we have? What do you say?

'*Anybody?*

'Aren't you ashamed of yourself, Caudle? Don't you think something will happen to you, to talk in that way? I don't know where you pick up such principles. I'm thinking who there is among our acquaintance who can do the most for the blessed creature, and you say,—"*Anybody!*" Caudle, you're quite a heathen.

'There 's Wagstaff. No chance of his ever marrying, and he 's very fond of babies. He 's plenty of money, Caudle; and I think he might be got. Babies, I know it—babies are his weak side. Wouldn't it be a blessed thing to find our dear child in his will? Why don't you speak? I declare, Caudle, you seem to care no more for the child than if it was a stranger's. People who can't love children more than you do, ought never to have 'em.

'*You don't like Wagstaff?*

'No more do I much; but what 's that to do with it? People who've their families to provide for, mustn't think of their feelings. *I* don't like him; but then I'm a mother, and love my baby.

'*You won't have Wagstaff, and that's flat?*

'Ha, Caudle, you're like nobody else—not fit for this world, you're not.

'What do you think of Pugsby? I can't bear his wife; but that's nothing to do with it. *I* know my duty to my babe; I wish other people did. What do you say?

'*Pugsby 's a wicked fellow?*

'Ha! that 's like you—always giving people a bad name. We mustn't always believe what the world says, Caudle; it doesn't become us as Christians to do it. I only know that he hasn't chick or child; and, besides that, he 's very strong interest in the Blue-coats; and so, if Pugsby——Now, don't fly out at the man in that manner. Caudle, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! You can't speak well of anybody. Where *do* you think to go to?

'What do you say, then, to Sniggins? Now, don't bounce round in that way, letting the cold air into the bed! What 's the matter with Sniggins?

'*You wouldn't ask him a favour for the world?*

'Well, it 's a good thing the baby has somebody to care for it: *I* will. What do you say?

'*I sha'n't?*

'I will, I can tell you. Sniggins, besides being a warm man, has good interest in the Customs; and there 's nice pickings there, if one only goes the right way to get 'em. It 's no use, Caudle, your fidgetting about—not a bit. I'm not going to have baby lost—sacrificed, I may say, like its brothers and sisters.

'*What do I mean by sacrificed?*

'Oh, you know what I mean very well. What have any of 'em got by their godfathers beyond a half-pint mug, a knife and fork, and spoon—and a shabby coat, that I know was bought second-hand, for I could almost swear to the place? And then there was your fine friend Hartley's wife—what did she give to Caroline? Why, a trumpery lace cap it made me blush to look at. What?

'*It was the best she could afford?*

'Then she'd no right to stand for the child. People who can't do better than that have no business to take the responsibility of godmother. They ought to know their duties better.

'Well, Caudle, you can't object to Goldman?

'*Yes, you do?*

'Was there ever such a man! What for?

'*He 's a usurer and a hunks?*

'Well, I'm sure, you've no business in this world, Caudle; you have such high-flown notions. Why, isn't the man as rich as the bank? And as for his being a usurer,—isn't it all the better for those who come after him? I'm sure it 's well there 's some people in the world who save money, seeing the stupid creatures who throw it away. But you are the strangest man! I really believe you think money a sin, instead of the greatest blessing; for I can't mention any of our acquaintance that 's rich—and I'm sure we don't know too many such people—that you haven't something to say against 'em. It 's only beggars that you like—

people with not a shilling to bless themselves. Ha! though you're my husband, I must say it—you're a man of low notions, Caudle. I only hope none of the dear boys will take after their father!

'And I should like to know what 's the objection to Goldman? The only thing against him is his name; I must confess it, I don't like the name of Lazarus: it 's

LITTLE NUMBER SIX BEGAN TO CRY

low, and doesn't sound genteel—not at all respectable. But after he 's gone and done what 's proper for the child, the boy could easily slip Lazarus into Laurence. I'm told the thing 's done often. No, Caudle, don't say that—I'm not a mean woman—certainly not; quite the reverse. I've only a parent's love for my children; and I must say it—I wish everybody felt as I did.

'I suppose, if the truth was known, you'd like your tobacco-pipe friend, your pot-companion, Prettyman, to stand for the child?

'*You'd have no objection?*

'I thought not! Yes; I knew what it was coming to. He 's a beggar, he is; and a person who stays out half the night; yes, he does; and it 's no use your denying it—a beggar and a tippler, and that 's the man you'd make godfather to your own flesh and blood! Upon my word, Caudle, it 's enough to make a woman get up and dress herself to hear you talk.

'Well I can hardly tell you, if you won't have Wagstaff, or Pugsby, or Sniggins, or Goldman, or somebody that 's respectable, to do what 's proper, the child sha'n't be christened at all. As for Prettyman, or any such raff—no, never! I'm sure there 's a certain set of people that poverty 's catching from, and that Prettyman 's one of 'em. Now, Caudle, I won't have my dear child lost by any of your spittoon acquaintance, I can tell you.

'No; unless I can have *my* way, the child sha'n't be christened at all. What do you say?

'*It must have a name?*

'There 's no "must" at all in the case—none. No, it shall have no name; and then see what the world will say. I'll call it Number Six—yes, that will do as well as anything else, unless I've the godfather I like. Number Six Caudle! ha! ha! I think that must make you ashamed of youself if anything can. Number Six Caudle—a much better name than Mr. Prettyman could give; yes, Number Six. What do you say?

'*Anything but Number Seven?*

'Oh, Caudle, if ever——'

'*At this moment,*' writes Caudle, '*little Number Six began to cry; and taking advantage of the happy accident, I somehow got to sleep.*'

LECTURE XVII

CAUDLE, IN THE COURSE OF THE DAY HAS VENTURED TO QUESTION THE ECONOMY OF 'WASHING AT HOME'

OOH! A pretty temper you come to bed in, Mr. Caudle, I can see! Oh, don't deny it—I think I ought to know by this time. But it's always the way; whenever I get up a few things, the house can hardly hold you! Nobody cries out more about clean linen than you do—and nobody leads a poor woman so miserable a life when she tries to make her husband comfortable. Yes, Mr. Caudle—comfortable! You needn't keep chewing the word, as if you couldn't swallow it.

'*Was there ever such a woman?*

'No, Caudle; I hope not: I should hope no other wife was ever put upon as I am! It's all very well for you. I can't have a little wash at home like anybody else but you must go about the house swearing to yourself, and looking at your wife as if she was your bitterest enemy. But I suppose you'd rather we didn't wash at all. Yes; then you'd be happy! To be sure you would—you'd like to have all the children in their dirt, like potatoes: anything, so that it didn't disturb you. I wish you'd had a wife who never washed—*she'd* have suited you, she would. Yes; a fine lady who'd have let your children go that you might have

scraped 'em. She'd have been much better cared for than I am. I only wish I could let all of you go without clean linen at all—yes, all of you. I wish I could! And if I wasn't a slave to my family, unlike anybody else, I should.

'No, Mr. Caudle; the house isn't tossed about in water as if it was Noah's Ark. And you ought to be ashamed of yourself to talk of Noah's Ark in that loose manner. I'm sure I don't know what I've done to be married to a man of such principles. No: and the whole house *doesn't* taste of soap-suds either; and if it did, any other man but yourself would be above naming it. I suppose I don't like washing-day any more than yourself. What do you say?

'*Yes, I do?*

'Ha! you're wrong there, Mr. Caudle. No; I don't like it because it makes everybody else uncomfortable. No; and I ought not to have been born a mermaid, that I might always have been in water. A mermaid, indeed! What next will you call me? But no man, Mr. Caudle, says such things to his wife as you. However, as I've said before, it can't last long, that 's one comfort. What do you say?

'*You're glad of it?*

'You're a brute, Mr. Caudle! No, you *didn't* mean washing: I know what you mean. A pretty speech to a woman who 's been the wife to you I have! You'll repent it when it 's too late: yes, I wouldn't have your feelings when I'm gone, Caudle; no, not for the Bank of England.

'And when we only wash once a fortnight! Ha! I only wish you had some wives, they'd wash once a week! Besides, if once a fortnight's too much for you, why don't you give me money that we may have things to go a month? Is it *my* fault if we're short? What do you say?

'*My "once a fortnight" lasts three days?*

'No, it doesn't; never; well, very seldom, and that 's the same thing. Can I help it, if the blacks will fly, and the things must be rinsed again? Don't say that; I'm

not made happy by the blacks, and they *don't* prolong my enjoyment; and, more than that, you're an unfeeling man to say so. You're enough to make a woman wish herself in her grave—you are, Caudle.

'And a pretty example you set to your sons! Because

MR. CAUDLE THINKS THE HOUSE TASTES OF SOAP-SUDS

we'd a little wash to-day, and there wasn't a hot dinner—and who thinks of getting anything hot for washerwomen?—because you hadn't everything as you always have it, you must swear at the cold mutton—and you don't know what that mutton cost a pound,

I dare say—you must swear at a sweet, wholesome joint like a lord. What ?

' *You didn't swear ?*

' Yes ; it 's very well for you to say so ; but I know when you're swearing ; and you swear when you little think it ; and I say you must go on swearing as you did, and seize your hat like a savage, and rush out of the house, and go and take your dinner at a tavern. A pretty wife people must think you have, when they find you dining at a public-house. A nice home they must think you have, Mr. Caudle ! What ?

' *You'll do so every time I wash ?*

' Very well, Mr. Caudle—very well. We'll soon see who 's tired of that, first ; for I'll wash a stocking a day if that 's all, sooner than you should have everything as you like. Ha ! that 's so like you : you'd trample everybody under foot, if you could—you know you would, Caudle, so don't deny it.

' Now, if you begin to shout in that manner, I'll leave the bed. It 's very hard that I can't say a single word to you, but you almost raise the place.

' *You didn't shout ?*

' I don't know what you call shouting, then ! I'm sure the people must hear you in the next house. No —it won't do to call me soft names, now, Caudle : I'm not the fool that I was when I was first married—I know better now. You're to treat me in the manner you have, all day ; and then at night, the only time and place when I can get a word in, you want to go to sleep. How can you be so mean, Caudle ?

' What ?

' *Why can't I put the washing out ?*

' Now, you have asked that a thousand times, but it 's no use, Caudle ; so don't ask it again. I won't put it out. What do you say ?

' *Mrs. Prettyman says it 's quite as cheap ?*

' Pray, what 's Mrs. Prettyman to me ? I should think, Mr. Caudle, that I know very well how to take care of my family without Mrs. Prettyman's advice. Mrs. Prettyman, indeed ! I only wish she'd come here,

that I might tell her so! Mrs. Prettyman! But perhaps, she'd better come and take care of your house for you! Oh, yes! I've no doubt she'd do it much better than I do—*much.* No, Caudle! *I won't hold my tongue.* I think I ought to be mistress of my own washing by this time—and after the wife I've been to you, it 's cruel of you to go on as you do.

MRS. CAUDLE HAS 'A SHORT WASH'

'Don't tell me about putting the washing out. I say it isn't so cheap—I don't care whether you wash by the dozen or not—it isn't so cheap; I've reduced everything, and I save at least a shilling a week. What do you say?

'*A trumpery shilling?*

'Ha! I only hope to goodness you'll not come to

want, talking of shillings in the way you do. Now, don't begin about your eomfort: don't go on aggravating me, and asking me if your eomfort 's not worth a shilling a week ? That 's nothing at all to do with it—nothing: but that 's your way—when I talk of one thing, you talk of another; that 's so like you men, and you know it. Allow me to tell you, Mr. Caudle, that a shilling a week is two pound twelve a year; and take two pound twelve a year for, let us say, thirty years, and—well, you needn't groan, Mr. Caudle—I don't suppose it will be so long; oh, no ! you'll have somebody else to look after your washing long before that—and if it wasn't for my dear ehildren's sake I shouldn't eare how soon. You know my mind—and so, good-night, Mr. Caudle.'

'*Thankful for her silence*,' writes Caudle, '*I was fast dropping to sleep; when, jogging my elbow, my wife observed*—"*Mind, there 's the cold mutton to-morrow—nothing hot till that 's gone. Remember, too, as it was a short wash to-day, we wash again on Wednesday.*" '

LECTURE XVIII

CAUDLE, WHILST WALKING WITH HIS WIFE, HAS BEEN BOWED TO BY A YOUNGER AND EVEN PRETTIER WOMAN THAN MRS. CAUDLE

IF I'm not to leave the house without being insulted, Mr. Caudle, I had better stay indoors all my life.

'What! Don't tell me to let you have *one* night's rest! I wonder at your impudence! It's mighty fine, I never can go out with you and — goodness knows!—it 's seldom enough without having my feelings torn to pieces by people of all sorts. A set of bold minxes!

'*What am I raving about?*

'Oh, you know very well—very well, indeed, Mr. Caudle. A pretty person she must be to nod to a man

walking with his own wife ! Don't tell me that it 's Miss Prettyman—what 's Miss Prettyman to me ? Oh !

' *You've met her once or twice at her brother's house ?*

' Yes, I dare say you have—no doubt of it. I always thought there was something very tempting about that house—and now I know it all. Now, it 's no use, Mr. Caudle, your beginning to talk loud, and twist and toss your arms about as if you were as innocent as a born babe—I'm not to be deceived by such tricks now. No ; there was a time when I was a fool and believed anything ; but—I thank my stars !—I've got over that.

' A bold minx ! You suppose I didn't see her laugh, too, when she nodded to you ! Oh yes, I knew what she thought me—a poor miserable creature, of course. I could see that. No—don't say so, Caudle. I *don't* always see more than anybody else—but I can't and won't be blind, however agreeable it might be to you ; I must have the use of my senses. I'm sure, if a woman wants attention and respect from a man, she'd better be anything than his wife. I've always thought so ; and to-day 's decided it.

' No ; I'm not ashamed of myself to talk so—certainly not.

' *A good, amiable young creature indeed !*

' Yes ; I dare say ; very amiable, no doubt. Of course, you think her so. You suppose I didn't see what sort of a bonnet she had on ? Oh, a very good creature ! And you think I didn't see the smudges of court plaster about her face ?

' *You didn't see 'em ?*

' Very likely ; but I did. Very amiable, to be sure ! What do you say ?

' *I made her blush at my ill manners ?*

' I should have liked to have seen her blush ! 'Twould have been rather difficult, Mr. Caudle, for a blush to come through all that paint. No—I'm not a censorious woman, Mr. Caudle ; quite the reverse. No ; and you may threaten to get up, if you like—I will speak. I know what colour is, and I say it *was* paint. I believe, Mr. Caudle, *I* once had a complexion—though of

course you've quite forgotten that: I think I once had a colour—before your conduct destroyed it. Before I knew you, people used to call me the Lily and Rose; but—what are you laughing at? I see nothing to laugh at. But as I say, anybody before your own wife.

'And I can't walk out with you but you're bowed to by every woman you meet!

'*What do I mean by every woman, when it 's only Miss Prettyman?*

'That 's nothing at all to do with it. How do I know who bows to you when I'm not by? Everybody of course. And if they don't look at you, why you look at them. Oh! I'm sure you do. You do it even when I'm out with you, and of course you do it when I'm away. Now, don't tell me, Caudle—don't deny it. The fact is, it 's become such a dreadful habit with you, that you don't know when you do it, and when you don't. But I do.

'Miss Prettyman, indeed! What do you say?

'*You won't lie still and hear me scandalise that excellent young woman?*

'Oh, of course you'll take her part! Though, to be sure, she may not be so much to blame after all. For how is she to know you're married? You're never seen out of doors with your own wife—never. Wherever you go, you go alone. Of course people think you're a bachelor. What do you say?

'*You well know you're not?*

'That 's nothing to do with it—I only ask, What must people think, when I'm never seen with you? Other women go out with their husbands: but, as I've often said, I'm not like any other woman. What are you sneering at, Mr. Caudle?

'*How do I know you're sneering?*

'Don't tell me: I know well enough, by the movement of the pillow.

'No; you never take me out—and you know it. No; and it 's not my own fault. How can you lie there and say that? Oh, all a poor excuse! That 's what you always say. You're tired of asking me, indeed, because

I always start some objection ? Of course I can't go out a figure. And when you ask me to go, you know very well that my bonnet isn't as it should be—or that my gown hasn't come home—or that I can't leave the children—or that something keeps me indoors. You know all this well enough before you ask me. And that 's your art. And when I *do* go out with you, I'm

MRS. CAUDLE 'WONDERS AT HIS IMPUDENCE'

sure to suffer for it. Yes, you needn't repeat my words. *Suffer for it.* But you suppose I have no feelings: oh no, nobody has feelings but yourself. Yes; I'd forgot: Miss Prettyman, perhaps—yes, she may have feelings, of course.

'And as I've said, I dare say a pretty dupe people think me. To be sure; a poor forlorn creature I must

look in everybody's eyes. But I knew you couldn't be at Mr. Prettyman's house night after night till eleven o'clock—and a great deal you thought of me sitting up for you—I knew you couldn't be there without some cause. And now I've found it out! Oh, I don't mind your swearing, Mr. Caudle! It 's I, if I wasn't a woman, who ought to swear. But it 's like you men. Lords of the creation, as you call yourselves! Lords, indeed! And pretty slaves you make of the poor creatures who're tied to you. But I'll be separated, Caudle; I will; and then I'll take care and let all the world know how you've used me. What do you say?

'*I may say my worst?*

'Ha! don't you tempt any woman in that way—don't, Caudle; for I wouldn't answer for what I said.

'Miss Prettyman, indeed, and—oh yes! now I see! Now the whole light breaks in upon me! Now I know why you wished me to ask her with Mr. and Mrs. Prettyman to tea! And I, like a poor blind fool, was nearly doing it. But now, as I say, my eyes are open! And you'd have brought her under my own roof—now it 's no use your bouncing about in that fashion—you'd have brought her into the very house, where——'

'*Here,*' says Caudle, '*I could endure it no longer. So I jumped out of bed, and went and slept somehow with the children.*'

LECTURE XIX

MRS. CAUDLE THINKS 'IT WOULD LOOK WELL TO KEEP THEIR WEDDING-DAY'

AUDLE, love, do you know what next Sunday is?

'*No! you don't?*

'Well, was there ever such a strange man! Can't you guess, darling? Next Sunday, dear? Think, love, a minute—just think.

'*What! and you don't know now?*

'Ha! if I hadn't a better memory than you, I don't know how we should ever get on. Well, then, pet,—shall I tell you what next Sunday is? Why, then, it's our wedding-day—— What are you groaning at, Mr. Caudle? I don't see anything to groan at. If anybody should groan, I'm sure it isn't you. No: I rather think it's I who ought to groan!

'Oh dear! That's fourteen years ago. You were a very different man then, Mr. Caudle. What do you say—— ?

'*And I was a very different woman?*

'Not at all—just the same. Oh, you needn't roll

your head about on the pillow in that way: I say, just the same. Well, then, if I'm altered, whose fault is it? Not mine, I'm sure—certainly not. Don't tell me that I couldn't talk at all then—I could talk just as well then as I can now; only then I hadn't the same cause. It 's you who've made me talk. What do you say?

'*You're very sorry for it?*

'Caudle, you do nothing but insult me.

'Ha! you were a good-tempered, nice creature fourteen years ago, and would have done anything for me. Yes, yes, if a woman would be always cared for, she should never marry. There 's quite an end of the charm when she goes to church! We're all angels while you're courting us; but once married, how soon you pull our wings off! No, Mr. Caudle, I'm not talking nonsense; but the truth is, you like to hear nobody talk but yourself. Nobody ever tells me that I talk nonsense but you. Now, it 's no use your turning and turning about in that way, it 's not a bit of—what do you say?

'*You'll get up?*

'No you won't, Mr. Caudle; you'll not serve me that trick again; for I've locked the door and hid the key. There 's no getting hold of you all the day-time—but here you can't leave me. You needn't groan again, Mr. Caudle.

'Now, Caudle, dear, do let us talk comfortably. After all, love, there 's a good many folks who, I daresay, don't get on half so well as we've done. We've both our little tempers, perhaps; but you *are* aggravating; you must own that, Caudle. Well, never mind; we won't talk of it; I won't scold you now. We'll talk of next Sunday, love. We never have kept our wedding-day, and I think it would be a nice day to have our friends. What do you say?

'*They'd think it hypocrisy?*

'No hypocrisy at all. I'm sure I try to be comfortable; and if ever man was happy, *you* ought to be. No, Caudle, no; it isn't nonsense to keep wedding-days; it isn't a deception on the world; and if it is, how many

people do it! I'm sure it 's only a proper compliment that a man owes to his wife. Look at the Winkles—don't they give a dinner every year? Well, I know, and if they do fight a little in the course of the twelvemonth, that 's nothing to do with it. They keep their wedding-day, and their acquaintance have nothing to do with anything else.

MRS. CAUDLE'S WEDDING-DAY

'As I say, Caudle, it 's only a proper compliment that a man owes to his wife to keep his wedding-day. It 's as much as to say to the whole world—"There! if I had to marry again, my blessed wife 's the only woman I'd choose!" Well! I see nothing to groan at, Mr. Caudle—no, nor to sigh at either; but I know what you mean: I'm sure, what would have become of you if you hadn't

married as you have done—why, you'd have been a lost creature! I know it; I know your habits, Caudle; and —I don't like to say it, but you'd have been little better than a ragamuffin. Nice scrapes you'd have got into, I know, if you hadn't had me for a wife. The trouble I've had to keep you respectable—and what's my thanks? Ha! I only wish you'd had some women!

'But we won't quarrel, Caudle. No; you don't mean anything, I know. We'll have this little dinner, eh? Just a few friends? Now don't say you don't care —that isn't the way to speak to a wife; and especially the wife I've been to you, Caudle. Well, you agree to the dinner, eh? Now, don't grunt, Mr. Caudle, but speak out. You'll keep your wedding-day? What?

'*If I let you go to sleep?*

'Ha! that's unmanly, Caudle. Can't you say "Yes," without anything else? I say—can't you say "Yes"? There, bless you! I knew you would.

'And now, Caudle, what shall we have for dinner? No—we won't talk of it to-morrow; we'll talk of it now, and then it will be off my mind. I should like something particular—something out of the way—just to show that we thought the day something. I should like—Mr. Caudle, you're not asleep?

'*What do I want?*

'Why, you know I want to settle about the dinner.

'*Have what I like?*

'No: as it's your fancy to keep the day, it's only right that I should try to please you. We never had one, Caudle; so what do you think of a haunch of venison? What do you say?

'*Mutton will do?*

'Ha! that shows what you think of your wife: I dare say if it was with any of your club friends—any of your pot-house companions—you'd have no objection to venison. I say if—what do you mutter?

'*Let it be venison?*

'Very well. And now about the fish? What do you think of a nice turbot? No, Mr. Caudle, brill won't do—it shall be turbot, or there sha'n't be any fish at all.

Oh, what a mean man you are, Caudle! Shall it be turbot?

'*It shall?*

'Very well. And now about the soup—now, Caudle, don't swear at the soup in that manner; you know there must be soup. Well, once in a way, and just to show our friends how happy we've been, we'll have some real turtle.

'*No, you won't, you'll have nothing but mock?*

'Then, Mr. Caudle, you may sit at the table by yourself. Mock-turtle on a wedding day! Was there ever such an insult? What do you say?

'*Let it be real, then, for once?*

'Ha, Caudle! As I say, you were a very different person fourteen years ago.

'And, Caudle, you'll look after the venison? There 's a place I know, somewhere in the City, where you get it beautiful! You'll look to it?

'*You will?*

'Very well.

'And now who shall we invite?

'*Who I like?*

'Now, you know, Caudle, that 's nonsense; because I only like whom you like. I suppose the Prettymans must come? But understand, Caudle, I don't have Miss Prettyman: I'm not going to have my peace of mind destroyed under my own roof! if she comes, I don't appear at the table. What do you say?

'*Very well?*

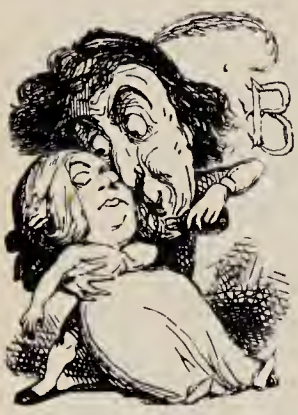
'Very well be it, then.

'And now, Caudle, you'll not forget the venison? In the City, my dear? You'll not forget the venison? A haunch, you know; a nice haunch. And you'll not forget the venison—— ?'

'*Three times did I fall off to sleep,*' says Caudle, '*and three times did my wife nudge me with her elbow, exclaiming—"You'll not forget the venison?" At last I got into a sound slumber, and dreamt I was a pot of currant jelly.*'

LECTURE XX

'BROTHER' CAUDLE HAS BEEN TO A MASONIC CHARITABLE DINNER. MRS. CAUDLE HAS HIDDEN THE 'BROTHER'S' CHEQUE-BOOK



BUT all I say is this: I only wish I'd been born a man. What do you say?

'*You wish I had?*

'Mr. Caudle, I'll not lie quiet in my own bed to be insulted. Oh, yes, you *did* mean to insult me. I know what you mean. You mean, if I *had* been born a man, you'd never have married me. That 's a pretty sentiment, I think; and after the wife I've been to you. And now I suppose you'll be going to public dinners every day! It 's no use your telling me you've only been to one before; that 's nothing to do with it—nothing at all. Of course you'll be out every night now. I knew what it would come to when you were made a mason: when you were once made a "brother," as you call yourself, I knew where the husband and father would be;—I'm sure, Caudle, and though I'm your own wife, I grieve to say it—I'm sure you haven't so much heart that you have any to spare for people out of doors. Indeed, I should like to see the man who has! No, no, Caudle; I'm by no means a selfish woman—quite the contrary; I love my fellow-creatures as a wife and mother of a family, who has only to look to her own husband and children, ought to love 'em.

'A "brother," indeed! What would you say, if I was

to go and be made a "sister"? Why, I know very well—the house wouldn't hold you.

'*Where 's your watch?*

'How should I know where your watch is? You ought to know. But to be sure, people who go to public dinners never know where anything is when they come home. You've lost it, no doubt; and 'twill serve you quite right if you have. If it should be gone—and nothing more likely—I wonder if any of your "brothers" will give you another? Catch 'em doing it.

'*You must find your watch? And you'll get up for it?*

'Nonsense!—don't be foolish—lie still. Your watch is on the mantelpiece. Ha! isn't it a good thing for you, you've somebody to take care of it?

'What do you say?

'*I'm a dear creature?*

'Very dear, indeed, you think me, I dare say. But the fact is, you don't know what you're talking about to-night. I'm a fool to open my lips to you—but I can't help it.

'*Where 's your watch?*

'Haven't I told you—on the mantelpiece?

'*All right, indeed!*

'Pretty conduct you men call all right. There now, hold your tongue, Mr. Caudle, and go to sleep: I'm sure 'tis the best thing you can do to-night. You'll be able to listen to reason to-morrow morning; now, it 's thrown away upon you.

'*Where 's your cheque-book?*

'Never mind your cheque-book. I took care of that.

'*What business had I to take it out of your pocket?*

'Every business. No, no. If you choose to go to public dinners, why—as I'm only your wife—I can't help it. But I know what fools men are made of there; and if I know it, you never take your cheque-book again with you. What! Didn't I see your name down last year for ten pounds? "Job Caudle, Esq., £10." It looked very well in the newspapers, of course: and you thought yourself a somebody, when they knocked the tavern tables; but I only wish I'd been there—yes, I only wish I'd been in the gallery. If I wouldn't have

told a piece of my mind, I'm not alive! Ten pounds indeed! and the world thinks you a very fine person for it. I only wish I could bring the world here, and show 'em what 's wanted at home. I think the world would alter their mind then; yes—a little.

'What do you say?

'*A wife has no right to pick her husband's pocket?*

MR. CAUDLE BRINGS HOME THE WRONG HAT

'A pretty husband you are, to talk in that way! Never mind: you can't prosecute her for it—or I've no doubt you would; none at all. Some men would do anything. What?

'*You've a bit of a headache?*

'I hope you have—and a good bit, too. You've been to the right place for it. No—I won't hold my tongue.

It's all very well for you men to go to taverns—and talk—and toast—and hurrah—and—I wonder you're not all ashamed of yourselves to drink the Queen's health with all the honours, I believe, you call it—yes, pretty honours you pay to the sex—I say, I wonder you're not ashamed to drink that blessed creature's health, when you've only to think how you use your own wives at home. But the hypocrites that the men are—oh!

'*Where 's your watch?*

'Haven't I told you? It 's under your pillow—there, you needn't be feeling for it. I tell you it 's under your pillow.

'*It's all right?*

'Yes; a great deal you know of what 's right just now! Ha! was there ever any poor soul used as I am!

'*I'm a dear creature?*

'Pah! Mr. Caudle! I've only to say, I'm tired of your conduct—quite tired, and don't care how soon there 's an end of it.

'*Why did I take your cheque-book?*

'I've told you—to save you from ruin, Mr. Caudle.

'*You're not going to be ruined?*

'Ha! you don't know anything when you're out! I know what they do at those public dinners—charities, they call 'em; pretty charities! True Charity, I believe, always dines at home. I know what they do: the whole system 's a trick. No: *I'm not a stony-hearted creature:* and you ought to be ashamed to say so of your wife and the mother of your children,—but you'll not make me cry to-night, I can tell you—I was going to say that—oh! you're such an aggravating man I don't know what I was going to say!

'*Thank Heaven?*

'What for? I don't see that there 's anything to thank Heaven about! I was going to say, I know the trick of public dinners. They get a lord, or a duke, if they can catch him—anything to make people say they dined with nobility, that 's it—yes, they get one of these people, with a star perhaps in his coat, to take the chair—and to talk all sorts of sugar-plum things

about charity—and to make foolish men, with wine in 'em, feel that they've no end of money; and then—shutting their eyes to their wives and families at home—all the while that their own faces are red and flushed like poppies, and they think to-morrow will never come—then they get 'em to put their hand to paper—then they make 'em pull out their cheques. But I took your book, Mr. Caudle—you couldn't do it a second time. What are you laughing at?

'*Nothing?*

'It 's no matter: I shall see it in the paper to-morrow; for if you gave anything, you were too proud to hide it. I know *your* charity.

'*Where 's your watch?*

'Haven't I told you fifty times where it is? In the pocket—over your head—of course. Can't you hear it tick? No: you can hear nothing to-night.

'And now, Mr. Caudle, I should like to know whose hat you've brought home? You went out with a beaver worth three-and-twenty shillings—the second time you've worn it—and you bring home a thing that no Jew in his senses would give me fivepence for. I couldn't even get a pot of primroses—and you know I always turn your old hats into roots—not a pot of primroses for it. I'm certain of it now—I've often thought it—but now I'm sure that some people dine out only to change their hats.

'*Where 's your watch?*

'Caudle, you're bringing me to an early grave!'

We hope that Caudle was penitent for his conduct; indeed, there is, we think, evidence that he was so: for to this lecture he has appended no comment. The man had not the face to do it.

LECTURE XXI

MR. CAUDLE HAS NOT ACTED 'LIKE A HUSBAND' AT THE WEDDING-DINNER

MR. CAUDLE AND MISS PRETTYMAN

H, me! It 's no use wishing—none at all: but I do wish that yesterday fourteen years could come back again. Little did I think, Mr. Caudle, when you brought me home from church, your lawful wedded wife — little, I say, did I think that I should keep my wedding-dinner in the manner I have done to-day. Fourteen years ago! Yes, I see you now, in your blue coat with bright buttons, and your white watered-satin waistcoat, and a moss-rose bud in your button-hole, which you said was like me. What?

'*You never talked such nonsense?*

'Ha! Mr. Caudle, you don't know what you talked that day—but I do. Yes; and you then sat at the table as if your face, as I may say, was buttered with happiness, and—What? No, Mr. Caudle, don't say

that; *I* have not wiped the butter off—not I. If you above all men are not happy, you ought to be, gracious knows!

'Yes, I *will* talk of fourteen years ago! Ha! you sat beside me then, and picked out all sorts of nice things for me. You'd have given me pearls and diamonds to eat if I could have swallowed 'em. Yes, I say, you sat beside me, and—— What do you talk about?

'*You couldn't sit beside me to-day?*

'That's nothing at all to do with it. But it's so like you. I can't speak but you fly off to something else. Ha! and when the health of the young couple was drunk, what a speech you made then! It was delicious! How you made everybody cry as if their hearts were breaking; and I recollect it as if it was yesterday, how the tears ran down dear father's nose, and how dear mother nearly went into a fit! Dear souls! They little thought, with all your fine talk, how you'd use me.

'*How have you used me?*

'Oh, Mr. Caudle, how can you ask that question? It's well for you I can't see you blush. *How* have you used me?

'Well, that the same tongue could make a speech like that, and then talk as it did to-day!

'*How did you talk?*

'Why shamefully! What did you say about your wedded happiness? Why, nothing. What did you say about your wife? Worse than nothing: just as if she were a bargain you were sorry for, but were obliged to make the best of. What do you say?

'*And bad's the best?*

'If you say that again, Caudle, I'll rise from my bed.

'*You didn't say it?*

'What, then, did you say? Something very like it, I know. Yes, a pretty speech of thanks for a husband! And everybody could see that you didn't care a pin for me; and that's why you had 'em here: that's why you invited 'em, to insult me to their faces. What?

'*I made you invite 'em ?*

'Oh, Caudle, what an aggravating man you are !

'I suppose you'll say next I made you invite Miss Prettyman ? Oh yes ; don't tell me that her brother brought her without you knowing it. What ?

'*Didn't I hear him say so ?*

'Of course I did ; but do you suppose I'm quite a fool ? Do you think I don't know that that was all settled between you ? And she must be a nice person to come unasked to a woman's house ? But I know why she came. Oh yes ; she came to look about her.

'*What do I mean ?*

'Oh, the meaning 's plain enough. She came to see how she should like the rooms—how she should like my seat at the fireplace; how she—and if it isn't enough to break a mother's heart to be treated so !—how she should like my dear children.

'Now, it 's no use your bouncing about at—but of course that 's it ; I can't mention Miss Prettyman but you fling about as if you were in a fit. Of course that shows there 's something in it. Otherwise, why should you disturb yourself ? Do you think I didn't see her

looking at the ciphers on the spoons as if she already saw mine scratched out and hers there ? No, I sha'n't drive you mad, Mr. Caudle ; and if I do it 's your own fault. No other man would treat the wife of his bosom in——What do you say ?

' *You might as well have married a hedgehog ?*

' Well, now it 's come to something ! But it 's always the ease ! Whenever you've seen that Miss Prettyman, I'm sure to be abused. A hedgehog ! A pretty thing for a woman to be called by her husband ! Now you don't think I'll lie quietly in bed, and be called a hedgehog—do you, Mr. Caudle ?

' Well, I only hope Miss Prettyman had a good dinner, that 's all. *I* had none ! You know I had none —how was I to get any ? You know that the only part of the turkey I care for is the merry-thought. And that, of course went to Miss Prettyman. Oh, I saw you laugh when you put it on her plate ! And you don't suppose, after such an insult as that, I'd taste another thing upon the table ? No, I should hope I have more spirit than that. Yes ; and you took wine with her four times. What do you say ?

' *Only twice ?*

' Oh, you were so lost—fascinated, Mr. Caudle ; yes, fascinated—that you didn't know what you did. However, I do think while I'm alive I might be treated with respect at my own table. I say, while I'm alive ; for I know I shan 't last long, and then Miss Prettyman may come and take it all. I'm wasting daily, and no wonder. I never say anything about it, but every week my gowns are taken in.

' I've lived to learn something, to be sure ! Miss Prettyman turned up her nose at my eustards. It isn't sufficient that you are always finding fault yourself, but you must bring women home to sneer at me at my own table. What do you say ?

' *She didn't turn up her nose ?*

' I know she did ; not but what it 's needless— Providenee has turned it up quite enough for her already. And she must give herself airs over my eustards!

Oh, I saw her mincing with the spoon as if she was chewing sand. What do you say ?

'*She praised my plum-pudding ?*

'Who asked her to praise it ? Like her impudence, I think !

'Yes, a pretty day I've passed. I shall not forget this wedding-day, I think ! And as I say, a pretty speech you made in the way of thanks. No, Caudle, if I was to live a hundred years—you needn't groan, Mr. Caudle, I shall not trouble you half that time—if I was to live a hundred years, I should never forget it. Never ! You didn't even so much as bring one of your children into your speech. And—dear creatures !—what have *they* done to offend you ? No ; I shall not drive you mad. It 's you, Mr. Caudle, who'll drive me mad. Everybody says so.

'And you suppose I didn't see how it was managed that you and *that* Miss Prettyman were always partners at whist ?

'*How was it managed ?*

'Why, plain enough. Of course you packed the cards, and could cut what you liked. You'd settled that between you. Yes ; and when she took a trick, instead of leading off a trump—*she* play whist, indeed ! what did you say to her, when she found it was wrong ? Oh—it was impossible that *her* heart should mistake ! And this, Mr. Caudle, before people—with your own wife in the room !

'And Miss Prettyman—I won't hold my tongue. I *will* talk of Miss Prettyman : who 's she, indeed, that I shouldn't talk of her ? I suppose she thinks she sings ? What do you say ?

'*She sings like a mermaid ?*

'Yes, very—very like a mermaid ; for she never sings but she exposes herself. She might, I think, have chosen another song. "*I love somebody*," indeed ; as if I didn't know who was meant by that "somebody" ; and all the room knew it, of course ; and that was what it was done for, nothing else.

'However, Mr. Caudle, as my mind's made up,

I shall say no more about the matter to-night, but try to go to sleep.'

'*And to my astonishment and gratitude*,' writes Caudle, '*she kept her word*.'

LECTURE XXII

CAUDLE COMES HOME IN THE EVENING, AS MRS. CAUDLE HAS 'JUST STEPPED OUT, SHOPPING.' ON HER RETURN, AT TEN, CAUDLE REMONSTRATES

R. CAUDLE, you ought to have had a slave—yes, a black slave, and not a wife. I'm sure, I'd better been born a negro at once—much better.

'*What 's the matter now?*

'Well, I like that. Upon my life, Mr. Caudle, that 's very cool. I can't leave the house just to buy a yard of riband, but you storm enough to carry the roof off.

'*You didn't storm? you only spoke?*

'Spoke, indeed! No, sir: I've not such superfine feelings; and I don't cry out before I'm hurt. But you ought to have married a woman of

stone, for you feel for nobody: that is, for nobody in your own house. I only wish you'd show some of your humanity at home, if ever so little—that 's all.

'What do you say?

'*Where 's my feelings, to go shopping at night?*

'When would you have me go? In the broiling sun, making my face like a gipsy's? I don't see anything to laugh at, Mr. Caudle; but you think of anybody's face before your wife's. Oh, that 's plain enough; and all the world can see it. I dare say, now, if it was Miss Prettyman's face—now, now, Mr. Caudle! What are you throwing yourself about for? I suppose Miss Prettyman isn't so wonderful a person that she isn't to be named? I suppose she 's flesh and blood. What?

'*You don't know?*

'Ha! I don't know that.

'What, Mr. Caudle?

'*You'll have a separate room—you'll not be tormented in this manner?*

'No, you won't, sir—not while I'm alive. A separate room! And you call yourself a religious man, Mr. Caudle. I'd advise you to take down the Prayer Book, and read over the Marriage Service. A separate room, indeed! Caudle, you're getting quite a heathen. A separate room! Well, the servants would talk then! But no: no man—not the best that ever trod, Caudle—should ever make me look so contemptible.

'I *sha'n't* go to sleep; and you ought to know me better than to ask me to hold my tongue. Because you come home when I've just stepped out to do a little shopping, you're worse than a fury. I should like to know how many hours I sit up for you? What do you say?

'*Nobody wants me to sit up?*

'Ha! that 's like the gratitude of men—just like 'em! But a poor woman can't leave the house, that—what?

'*Why can't I go at reasonable hours?*

'Reasonable! What do you call eight o'clock? If I went out at eleven and twelve, as you come home,

then you might talk; but seven or eight o'clock—why, it 's the cool of the evening; the nicest time to enjoy a walk; and, as I say, do a little bit of shopping. Oh yes, Mr. Caudle, I do think of the people that are kept in the shops just as much as you; but that 's

'WHY CAN'T I GO AT REASONABLE HOURS?'

nothing at all to do with it. I know what you'd have. You'd have all those young men let away early from the counter to improve what you please to call their minds. Pretty notions you pick up among a set of free-thinkers, and I don't know what! When I was a girl, people never

talked of minds—intellect, I believe you call it. Nonsense! a new-fangled thing, just come up; and the sooner it goes out, the better.

'Don't tell me! What are shops for, if they're not to be open late and early too? And what are shopmen, if they're not always to attend upon their customers? People pay for what they have, I suppose, and aren't to be told when they shall come and lay their money out, and when they sha'n't? Thank goodness! if one shop shuts, another keeps open; and I always think it a duty I owe to myself to go to the shop that 's open last: it 's the only way to punish the shopkeepers that are idle, and give themselves airs about early hours.

'Besides, there 's some things I like to buy best at candle-light. Oh, don't talk to me about humanity! Humanity, indeed, for a pack of tall, strapping young fellows—some of 'em big enough to be shown for giants! And what have they to do? Why nothing, but to stand behind a counter, and talk civility. Yes, I know your notions; you say that everybody works too much: I know that. You'd have all the world do nothing half its time but twiddle its thumbs, or walk in the parks, or go to picture-galleries, and museums, and such nonsense. Very fine, indeed; but, thank goodness! the world isn't come to that pass yet.

'What do you say I am, Mr. Caudle?

'*A foolish woman, that can't look beyond my own fireside?*

'Oh yes, I can; quite as far as you, and a great deal farther. But I can't go out shopping a little with my dear friend Mrs. Wittles—what do you laugh at? Oh, don't they? Don't women know what friendship is? Upon my life, you've a nice opinion of us! Oh yes, we *can*—we can look outside of our own fenders, Mr. Caudle. And if we can't, it 's all the better for our families. A blessed thing it would be for their wives and children if men couldn't either. You wouldn't have lent that five pounds—and I dare say a good many other five pounds that I know nothing of—if you—a lord of the creation!—had half the sense

women have. You seldom catch us, I believe, lending five pounds. I should think not.

'No: we won't talk of it to-morrow morning. You're not going to wound my feelings when I come home, and think I'm to say nothing about it. You have called me an inhuman person; you have said I have no thought, no feeling for the health and comfort of my fellow-creatures; I don't know what you haven't

MRS. CAUDLE DOES A 'LITTLE SHOPPING'

called me; and only for buying a—but I sha'n't tell you what; no, I won't satisfy you there—but you've abused me in this manner, and only for shopping up to ten o'clock. You've a great deal of fine compassion, you have! I'm sure the young man that served me could have knocked down an ox: yes, strong enough to lift a house: but you can pity him—oh yes, you can be

all kindness for him, and for the world, as you call it. Oh, Caudle, what a hypocrite you are! I only wish the world knew how you treated your poor wife!

'What do you say?

'*For the love of mercy let you sleep?*

'Mercy, indeed! I wish you could show a little of it to other people. Oh yes, I *do* know what mercy means; but that 's no reason I should go shopping a bit earlier than I do—and I won't. No; you've preached this over to me again and again. you've made me go to meetings to hear all about it; but that 's no reason women shouldn't shop just as late as they choose. It 's all very fine, as I say, for you men to talk to us at meetings, where, of course, we smile and all that—and sometimes shake our white pocket-handkerchiefs—and where you say we have the power of early hours in our own hands. To be sure we have; and we mean to keep it. That is, I do. You'll never catch me shopping till the very last thing; and—as a matter of principle—I'll always go to the shop that keeps open latest. It does the young men good to keep 'em close to business. Improve their minds indeed! Let 'em out at seven, and they'd improve nothing but their billiards. Besides, if they want to improve themselves, can't they get up, this fine weather, at three? Where there 's a will, there 's a way, Mr. Caudle.'

'*I thought,*' writes Caudle, '*that she had gone to sleep. In this hope, I was dozing off, when she jogged me, and thus declared herself: "Caudle, you want nightcaps; but see if I budge to buy 'em till nine at night!"*'

LECTURE XXIII

MRS. CAUDLE 'WISHES TO KNOW IF THEY'RE GOING TO THE SEA-SIDE, OR NOT, THIS SUMMER—THAT 'S ALL'

MRS. CAUDLE AT MARGATE

HOT? Yes, it *is* hot. I'm sure one might as well be in an oven as in town this weather. You seem to forget it 's July, Mr. Caudle. I've been waiting quietly—have never spoken; yet, not a word have you said of the seaside yet. Not that I care for it myself — oh, no; my health isn't of the slightest consequence. And, indeed, I was going to say—but I won't—that the sooner, perhaps, I'm out of this world, the better. Oh, yes; I dare say you think so—of course you do, else you wouldn't lie there saying nothing. You're enough to aggravate a saint, Caudle; but you sha'n't vex me. No; I've made up my mind, and never intend to let you vex me again. Why should I worry myself?

'But all I want to ask you is this: do you intend to go to the sea-side this summer?

'*Yes? you'll go to Gravesend?*

'Then you'll go alone, that 's all I know. Gravesend! You might as well empty a salt-cellar in the New River, and call that the sea-side. What?

'*It 's handy for business?*

'There you are again! I can never speak of taking a little enjoyment, but you fling business in my teeth. I'm sure you never let business stand in the way of your own pleasure, Mr. Caudle,—not you. It would be all the better for your family if you did.

'You know that Matilda wants sea-bathing; you know it, or ought to know it, by the looks of the child; and yet—I know you, Caudle—you'd have let the summer pass over, and never said a word about the matter. What do you say?

'*Margate 's so expensive?*

'Not at all. I'm sure it will be cheaper for us in the end; for if we don't go, we shall all be ill—every one of us—in the winter. Not that my health is of any consequence: I know that well enough. It never was yet. You know Margate 's the only place I can eat a breakfast at, and yet you talk of Gravesend! But what 's my eating to you? You wouldn't care if I never ate at all. You never watch my appetite like any other husband, otherwise you'd have seen what it 's come to.

'What do you say?

'*How much will it cost?*

'There you are, Mr. Caudle, with your meanness again. When you want to go yourself to Blackwall or to Greenwich you never ask, how much will it cost? What?

'*You never go to Blackwall?*

'Ha! I don't know that; and if you don't, that 's nothing at all to do with it. Yes, you can give a guinea a plate for whitebait for yourself. No, sir: I'm not a foolish woman: and I know very well what I'm talking about—nobody better. A guinea for whitebait

for yourself, when you grudge a pint of shrimps for your poor family. Eh ?

'*You don't grudge 'em anything ?*

'Yes, it 's very well for you to lie there and say so.

'*What will it cost ?*

'It 's no matter what it will cost, for we won't go at all now. No ; we'll stay at home. We shall all be ill in the winter—every one of us, all but you ; and nothing ever makes you ill. I've no doubt we shall all be laid up, and there'll be a doctor's bill as long as a railroad ; but never mind that. It 's better—much better—to pay for nasty physic than for fresh air and wholesome salt water. Don't call me "woman," and ask "what it will cost." I tell you, if you were to lay the money down before me on that quilt, I wouldn't go now—certainly not. It 's better we should all be sick ; yes, then you'll be pleased.

'That 's right, Mr. Caudle ; go to sleep. It 's like your unfeeling self ! I'm talking of our all being laid up ; and you, like any stone, turn round and begin to go to sleep. Well, I think that 's a pretty insult !

'*How can you sleep with such a splinter in your flesh ?*

'I suppose you mean to call me the splinter ?—and after the wife I've been to you ! But no, Mr. Caudle, you may call me what you please ; you'll not make me cry now. No, no ; I don't throw away my tears upon any such person now.

'What ?

'*Don't ?*

'Ha ! that 's your ingratitude ! But none of you men deserve that any woman should love you. My poor heart !

'Everybody else can go out of town except us. Ha ! If I'd only married Simmons—— What ?

'*Why didn't I ?*

'Yes, that 's all the thanks I get.

'*Who 's Simmons ?*

'Oh, you know very well who Simmons is. He'd have treated me a little better, I think. He *was* a gentleman.

'*You can't tell?*

'May be not: but I can. With such weather as this, to stay melting in London; and when the painters are coming in!

'*You won't have the painters in?*

'But you must; and if they once come in, I'm determined that none of us shall stir then. Painting

MR. AND MRS. CAUDLE AT THE SEA-SIDE

in July, with a family in the house! We shall all be poisoned, of course; but what do you care for that?

'*Why can't I tell you what it will cost?*

'How can I or any woman tell exactly what it will cost? Of course lodgings—and at Margate, too—are a little dearer than living at your own house.

'*Pooh! You know that?*

'Well, if you did, Mr. Caudle, I suppose there 's no

treason in naming it. Still, if you take 'em for two months, they're cheaper than for one. No, Mr. Caudle, I shall not be quite tired of it in one month. No: and it isn't true that I no sooner get out than I want to get home again. To be sure, I was tired of Margate three years ago, when you used to leave me to walk about the beach by myself, to be stared at through all sorts of telescopes. But you don't do that again, Mr. Caudle, I can tell you.

'*What will I do at Margate?*

'Why, isn't there bathing, and picking up shells; and aren't there the packets, with the donkeys; and the last new novel, whatever it is, to read?—for the only place where I really relish a book is at the sea-side. No; it isn't that I like salt with my reading, Mr. Caudle! I suppose you call that a joke? You might keep your jokes for the daytime, I think. But as I was saying—only you always will interrupt me—the ocean always seems to me to open the mind. I see nothing to laugh at; but you always laugh when I say anything. Sometimes at the sea-side—especially when the tide 's down—I feel so happy: quite as if I could cry.

'When shall I get the things ready? For next Sunday?

'*What will it cost?*

'Oh, there—don't talk of it. No: we won't go. I shall send for the painters to-morrow. What?

'*I can go and take the children, and you'll stay?*

'No, sir: you go with me, or I don't stir. I'm not going to be turned loose like a hen with her chickens, and nobody to protect me. So we'll go on Monday? Eh?

'*What will it cost?*

'What a man you are! Why, Caudle, I've been reckoning that, with buff slippers and all, we can't well do it under seventy pounds. No; I won't take away the slippers and say fifty. It 's seventy pounds and no less. Of course, what 's over will be so much saved. Caudle, what a man you are! Well, shall we go on Monday? What do you say——

'*You'll see?*
'There 's a dear. Then Monday.'

'*Anything for a chance of peace*,' writes Caudle. '*I consented to the trip, for I thought I might sleep better in a change of bed.*'

LECTURE XXIV

MRS. CAUDLE DWELLS ON CAUDLE'S 'CRUEL NEGLECT' OF HER ON BOARD THE 'RED ROVER.' MRS. CAUDLE SO 'ILL WITH THE SEA,' THAT THEY PUT UP AT THE DOLPHIN, HERNE BAY

ON BOARD THE 'RED ROVER'

CAUDLE, have you looked under the bed?

'*What for?*

'Bless the man! Why, for thieves, to be sure. Do you suppose I'd sleep in a strange bed without? Don't tell me it's nonsense! I shouldn't sleep a wink allnight. Not that you'd care for that; not that you'd—hush! I'm sure I heard somebody. No; it's not a bit like a mouse. Yes; that's like you—laugh.

It would be no laughing matter if—I'm sure there *is* somebody !—I'm sure there is !

'——Yes, Mr. Caudle ; now I *am* satisfied. Any other man would have got up and looked himself ; especially after my sufferings on board that nasty ship. But catch you stirring ! Oh, no ! You'd let me lie here and be robbed and killed, for what you'd care. Why you're not going to sleep ? What do you say ?

'*It's the strange air—and you're always sleepy in a strange air ?*

'That shows the feelings you have, after what I've gone through. And yawning, too, in that brutal manner ! Caudle, you've no more heart than that wooden figure in a white petticoat at the front of the ship.

'No ; I *couldn't* leave my temper at home. I dare say ! Because for once in your life you've brought me out—yes, I say once, or two or three times, it isn't more ; because, as I say, you once bring me out, I'm to be a slave and say nothing. Pleasure, indeed ! A great deal of pleasure I'm to have, if I'm told to hold my tongue. A nice way that of pleasing a woman.

'Dear me ! if the bed doesn't spin round and dance about ! I've got all that filthy ship in my head ! No : I sha'n't be well in the morning. But nothing ever ails anybody but yourself. You needn't groan in that way, Mr. Caudle, disturbing the people, perhaps, in the next room. It's a mercy I'm alive, I'm sure. If once I wouldn't have given all the world for anybody to have thrown me overboard ! What are you smacking your lips at, Mr. Caudle ? But I know what you mean—of course, you'd never have stirred to stop 'em ; not you. And then you might have known that the wind would have blown to-day ; but that 's why you came.

'Whatever I should have done if it hadn't been for that good soul—that blessed Captain Large ! I'm sure all the women who go to Margate ought to pray for him ; so attentive in sea-sickness, and so much of a gentleman ! How I should have got down stairs without him when I first began to turn, I don't know. Don't

tell me I never complained to you; you might have seen I was ill. And when everybody was looking like a bad wax-candle, you could walk about, and make what you call your jokes upon the little buoy that was never sick at the Nore, and such unfeeling trash.

MR. CAUDLE ENJOYS HIS BRANDY-AND-WATER

'Yes, Caudle; we've now been married many years but if we were to live together for a thousand years to come—what are you clasping your hands at?—a thousand years to come, I say, I shall never forget your

conduct this day. You could go to the other end of the ship and smoke a cigar, when you knew I should be ill—oh, you knew it; for I always am. The brutal way, too, in which you took that cold brandy-and-water—you thought I didn't see you; but ill as I was, hardly able to hold my head up, I was watching you all the time. Three glasses of cold brandy-and-water; and you sipped 'em, and drank the health of people who you didn't care a pin about; whilst the health of your own lawful wife was nothing. Three glasses of brandy-and-water, and *I* left—as I may say—alone! You didn't hear 'em, but everybody was crying shame of you.

'What do you say?

'*A good deal my own fault? I took too much dinner?*

'Well, you are a man! If I took more than the breast and leg of that young goose—a thing, I may say, just out of the shell—with the slightest bit of stuffing, I'm a wicked woman. What do you say?

'*Lobster salad?*

'La!—how can you speak of it? A month-old baby would have eaten more. What?

'*Gooseberry pie?*

'Well, if you'll name that you'll name anything. Ate too much indeed! Do you think I was going to pay for a dinner, and eat nothing? No, Mr. Caudle; it's a good thing for you that I know a little more of the value of money than that.

'But, of course, you were better engaged than in attending to me. Mr. Prettyman came on board at Gravesend. A planned thing, of course. You think I didn't see him give you a letter.

'*It wasn't a letter; it was a newspaper?*

'I daresay; ill as I was, I had my eyes. It was the smallest newspaper I ever saw, that's all. But of course, a letter from Miss Prettyman—— Now, Caudle, if you begin to cry out in that manner, I'll get up. Do you forget that you are not at your own house? making that noise! Disturbing everybody! Why, we

shall have the landlord up! And you could smoke and drink "forward," as you called it. What?

'*You couldn't smoke anywhere else?*

'That's nothing to do with it. Yes; forward. What a pity that Miss Prettyman wasn't with you! I'm sure nothing could be too forward for her. No, I won't hold my tongue; and I ought not to be ashamed of myself. It isn't treason, is it, to speak of Miss Prettyman? After all I've suffered to-day, and I'm not to open my lips! Yes; I'm to be brought away from my own home, dragged down here to the sea-side, and made ill! and I'm not to speak. I should like to know what next.

'It's a mercy some of the dear children were not drowned; not that their father would have cared, so long as he could have had his brandy and cigars. Peter was as near through one of the holes as——

'*It's no such thing?*

'It's very well for you to say so, but you know what an inquisitive boy he is, and how he likes to wander among steam-engines. No, I won't let you sleep. What a man you are! What?

'*I've said that before?*

'That's no matter; I'll say it again. Go to sleep, indeed! as if one could never have a little rational conversation. No, I sha'n't be too late for the Margate boat in the morning; I can wake up at what hour I like, and you ought to know that by this time.

'A miserable creature they must have thought me in the ladies' cabin, with nobody coming down to see how I was.

'*You came a dozen times?*

'No, Caudle, that won't do. I know better. You never came at all. Oh, no! cigars and brandy took all your attention. And when I was so ill, that I didn't know a single thing that was going on about me, and you never came. Every other woman's husband was there—ha! twenty times. And what must have been my feelings to hear 'em tapping at the door, and making all sorts of kind inquiries—something like husbands!—

and I was left to be ill alone ? Yes ; and you want to get me into an argument. You want to know, if I was so ill that I knew nothing, how could I know that you didn't come to the cabin-door ? That 's just like your aggravating way ; but I'm not to be caught in that manner, Caudle. No.'

'*It is very possible*,' writes Caudle, '*that she talked two hours more ; but, happily, the wind got suddenly up—the waves bellowed—and, soothed by the sweet lullaby* (*to say nothing of the Dolphin's brandy-and-water*) *I somehow sank to repose.*'

LECTURE XXV

MRS. CAUDLE, WEARIED OF MARGATE, HAS 'A GREAT DESIRE TO SEE FRANCE'

BLESS me aren't you tired, Caudle?

'*No?*

'Well, was there ever such a man! But nothing ever tires you. Of course, it 's all very well for you: yes, you can read your newspapers and—— What?

'*So can I?*

'And I wonder what would become of the children if I did! No; it 's enough for their father to lose his precious time, talking about politics, and bishops, and lords, and a pack of people who wouldn't care a pin if we hadn't a roof to cover us—it 's well enough for—no, Caudle, no: I'm not going to worry you; I never worried you yet, and it isn't likely I should begin now. But that 's always the way with you—always. I'm sure we should be the happiest couple alive, only you do so like to have all the talk to yourself. We're out upon pleasure, and therefore let 's be comfortable. Still, I must say it: when you like, you're an aggravating man, Caudle, and you know it.

'*What have you done now?*

'There, now; we won't talk of it. No; let 's go to sleep: otherwise we shall quarrel—I know we shall. What have you done, indeed! That I can't leave my home for a few days, but I must be insulted! Everybody upon the pier saw it.

'*Saw what?*

'How can you lie there in the bed and ask me? Saw what, indeed! Of course it was a planned thing!—regularly settled before you left London. Oh yes! I like your innocence, Mr. Caudle; not knowing what I'm talking about. It 's a heart-breaking thing for a woman to say of her own husband; but you've been a wicked man to me. Yes: and all your tossing and tumbling about in the bed won't make it any better.

'Oh, it 's easy enough to call a woman "a dear soul." I must be very dear, indeed, to you, when you bring down Miss Prettyman to—there now; you needn't shout like a wild savage. Do you know that you're not in your own house—do you know that we're in lodgings? What do you suppose the people will think of us? You needn't call out in that manner, for they can hear every word that 's said. What do you say?

'*Why don't I hold my tongue then?*

'To be sure; anything for an excuse with you. Anything to stop my mouth. Miss Prettyman's to follow you here, and I'm to say nothing, I know she *has* followed you; and if you were to go before a magistrate, and take a shilling oath to the contrary, I wouldn't believe you. No, Caudle; I wouldn't.

'*Very well, then?*

'Ha! what a heart you must have, to say "very well"; and after the wife I've been to you. I'm to be brought from my own home—dragged down here to the sea-side—to be laughed at before the world—don't tell me. Do you think I didn't see how she looked at you—how she puckered up her farthing mouth—and—what?

'*Why did I kiss her, then?*

'What 's that to do with it? Appearances are one

thing, Mr. Caudle; and feelings are another. As if women can't kiss one another without meaning anything by it! And you—I could see you—looked as cold and as formal at her as—well, Caudle! I wouldn't be the hypocrite you are for the world!

'There, now; I've heard all that story. I daresay she did come down to join her brother. How very

MRS. CAUDLE MEETS MISS PRETTYMAN

lucky, though, that you should be here! Ha! ha! how very lucky that—ugh! ugh! ugh! and with the cough I've got upon me—oh, you've a heart like a sea-side flint! Yes, that's right. That's just like your humanity. I can't catch a cold, but it must be my own fault—it must be my thin shoes. I daresay you'd like to see me in ploughman's boots; 'twould be no

matter to you how I disfigured myself. Miss Prettyman's foot, now, would be another thing—no doubt.

'I thought when you would make me leave home—I thought we were coming here on pleasure: but it 's always the way you embitter my life. The sooner that I'm out of the world the better. What do you say?

'*Nothing?*

'But I know what you mean, better than if you talked an hour. I only hope you'll get a better wife, that 's all, Mr. Caudle. What?

'*You'd not try?*

'Wouldn't you? I know you. In six months you'd fill up my place; yes, and dreadfully my dear children would suffer for it.

'Caudle, if you roar in that way, the people will give us warning to-morrow.

'*Can't I be quiet, then?*

'Yes—that 's like your artfulness: anything to make me hold my tongue. But we won't quarrel. I'm sure if it depended upon me, we might be as happy as doves. I mean it—and you needn't groan when I say it. Good-night, Caudle. What do you say?

'*Bless me!*

'Well, you are a dear soul, Caudle; and if it wasn't for that Miss Prettyman—no, I'm not torturing you. I know very well what I'm doing, and I wouldn't torture you for the world; but you don't know what the feelings of a wife are, Caudle; you don't.

'Caudle—I say, Caudle. Just a word, dear.

'*Well?*

'Now, why should you snap me up in that way?

'*You want to go to sleep?*

'So do I; but that 's no reason you should speak to me in that manner. You know, dear, you once promised to take me to France.

'*You don't recollect it?*

'Yes—that 's like you; you don't recollect many things you've promised me: but I do. There 's a boat goes on Wednesday to Boulogne, and comes back the day afterwards.

'*What of it?*

'Why, for that time we could leave the children with the girls, and go nicely.

'*Nonsense?*

'Of course; if I want anything it 's always nonsense. Other men can take their wives half over the world; but you think it quite enough to bring me down here to

MR. AND MRS. CAUDLE TAKE A TRIP TO BOULOGNE

this hole of a place, where I know every pebble on the beach like an old acquaintance—where there 's nothing to be seen but the same machines—the same jetty—the same donkeys—the same everything. But then, I'd forgot; Margate has an attraction for you—Miss Prettyman 's here. No; I'm not censorious, and I wouldn't backbite an angel; but the way in which

that young woman walks the sands at all hours—there! there!—I've done: I can't open my lips about that creature but you always storm.

'You know that I always wanted to go to France; and you bring me down here only on purpose that I should see the French cliffs—just to tantalise me, and for nothing else. If I'd remained at home—and it was against my will I ever came here—I should never have thought of France; but—to have it staring in one's face all day, and not be allowed to go! it 's worse than cruel, Mr. Caudle—it 's brutal. Other people can take their wives to Paris; but you always keep me moped up at home. And what for? Why, that I may know nothing—yes; just on purpose to make me look little, and for nothing else.

'*Heaven bless the woman?*

'Ha! you've good reason to say that, Mr. Caudle; for I'm sure she 's little blessed by you. She 's been kept a prisoner all her life—has never gone anywhere—oh yes! that 's your old excuse,—talking of the children. I want to go to France, and I should like to know what the children have to do with it? They're not babies *now*—are they? But you've always thrown the children in my face. If Miss Prettyman—there now; do you hear what you've done—shouting in that manner? The other lodgers are knocking overhead: who do you think will have the face to look at 'em to-morrow morning? *I* sha'n't—breaking people's rest in that way!

'Well, Caudle—I declare it 's getting daylight, and what an obstinate man you are!—tell me, shall I go to France?'

'*I forget,*' says Caudle, '*my precise answer; but I think I gave her a very wide permission to go somewhere, whereupon, though not without remonstrance as to the place—she went to sleep.*'

LECTURE XXVI

MRS. CAUDLE'S FIRST NIGHT IN FRANCE—'SHAMEFUL INDIFFERENCE' OF CAUDLE AT THE BOULOGNE CUSTOM HOUSE

SUPPOSE, Mr. Caudle, you call yourself a man? I'm sure such men should never have wives. If I could have thought it possible you'd have behaved as you have done—and I might, if I hadn't been a forgiving creature, for you've never been like anybody else—if I could only have thought it, you'd never have dragged me to foreign parts. Never! Well, I *did* say to myself, if he goes to France, perhaps he may catch a little politeness—but no; you began as Caudle, and as Caudle you'll end. I'm to be neglected through life, now. Oh yes! I've quite given up all thoughts of anything but wretchedness—I've made up my mind to misery, now.

'*You're glad of it?*

'Well, you must have a heart to say that. I declare to you, Caudle, as true as I'm an ill-used woman, if it wasn't for the dear children far away in blessed England—if it wasn't for them, I'd never go back with you. No; I'd leave you in this very place. Yes; I'd go into a convent; for a lady on board told me there was plenty of 'em here. I'd go and be a nun for the rest of my days, and—I see nothing to laugh at, Mr. Caudle; that you should be shaking the bed-things up and down in that way. But you always laugh at people's feelings; I wish you'd only some yourself. I'd be a nun, or a Sister of Charity.

'*Impossible?*

'Ha! Mr. Caudle, you don't know even now what I can be when my blood 's up. You've trod upon the worm long enough; some day won't you be sorry for it!

'Now, none of your profane cryings out! You needn't talk about Heaven in that way: I'm sure you're the last person who ought. What I say is this. Your conduct at the Custom House was shameful—cruel! And in a foreign land, too! But you brought me here that I might be insulted; you'd no other reason for dragging me from England. Ha! let me once get home, Mr. Caudle, and you may wear your tongue out before you get me into outlandish places again.

'*What have you done?*

'There now; that 's where you're so aggravating. You behave worse than any Turk to me,—what?

'*You wish you were a Turk?*

'Well, I think that 's a pretty wish before your lawful wife! Yes—a nice Turk you'd make, wouldn't you? Don't think it.

'*What have you done?*

'Well, it 's a good thing I can't see you, for I'm sure you must blush. Done, indeed!

'Why, when the brutes searched my basket at the Custom House!

'*A regular thing, is it?*

'Then if you knew that, why did you bring me here? No man who respected his wife would. And you could stand by, and see that fellow with mustachios rummage my basket; and pull out my night-cap and rumple the borders, and—well! if you'd had the proper feelings of a husband, your blood would have boiled again. But no! There you stood looking as mild as butter at the man, and never said a word; not when he crumpled my night-cap—it went to my heart like a stab—crumpled it as if it were any duster. I dare say if it had been Miss Prettyman's night-cap—oh, I don't care about your groaning—if it had been her night-cap, her hair-brush, her curl-papers, you'd have said something then. Oh, anybody with the spirit of

a man would have spoken out if the fellow had had a thousand swords at his side. Well, all I know is this: if I'd have married somebody I could name, he wouldn't have suffered me to be treated in that way, not he!

'Now, don't hope to go to sleep, Mr. Caudle, and

'THE BRUTES SEARCHED MRS. CAUDLE'S BASKET AT THE CUSTOM HOUSE'

think to silence me in that manner. I know your art, but it won't do. It wasn't enough that my basket was turned topsy-turvy, but before I knew it, they spun me into another room, and——

'*How could you help that?*

'You never tried to help it. No; although it was a foreign land, and I don't speak French—not but what I know a good deal more of it than some people who give themselves airs about it—though I don't speak their nasty gibberish, still you let them take me away, and never cared how I was ever to find you again. In a strange country, too! But I've no doubt that that 's what you wished: yes, you'd have been glad enough to have got rid of me in that cowardly manner. If I could only know your secret thoughts, Caudle, that 's what you brought me here for, to lose me. And after the wife I've been to you!

'What are you crying out?

'*For mercy's sake?*

'Yes; a great deal you know about mercy! Else you'd never have suffered me to be twisted into that room. To be searched, indeed! As if I'd anything smuggled about me. Well, I will say it, after the way in which I've been used, if you'd the proper feelings of a man, you wouldn't sleep again for six months. Well, I know there was nobody but women there; but that 's nothing to do with it. I'm sure, if I'd been taken up for picking pockets, they couldn't have used me worse. To be treated so—and 'specially by one's own sex!—it 's *that* that aggravates me.

'And that 's all you can say?

'*What could you do?*

'Why, break open the door; I'm sure you must have heard my voice: you shall never make me believe you couldn't hear that. Whenever I shall sew the strings on again, I can't tell. If they didn't turn me out like a ship in a storm, I'm a sinner! And you laughed!

'*You didn't laugh?*

'Don't tell me; you laugh when you don't know anything about it; but I do.

'And a pretty place you have brought me to! A most respectable place, I must say! Where the women walk about without any bonnets to their heads, and the fish-girls with their bare legs—well, you don't catch me eating any fish while I'm here.

'*Why not?*

'Why not,—do you think I'd encourage people of that sort?

'What do you say?

'*Good-night?*

'It 's no use your saying that—I can't go to sleep so soon as you can. Especially with a door that has such a

MR. CAUDLE ADMIRES THE FISH-WOMEN

lock as that to it. How do we know who may come in? What?

'*All the locks are bad in France?*

'The more shame for you to bring me to such a place, then. It only shows how you value me.

'Well, I dare say you are tired. *I* am! But then,

see what I've gone through. Well, we won't quarrel in a barbarous country. We won't do that. Caudle, dear,—what 's the French for lace ? I know it, only I forget it. The French for lace, love ? What ?

' *Dentelle ?*

' Now, you're not decieving me ?

' *You never deceived me yet ?*

' Oh ! don't say that. There isn't a married man in this blessed world can put his hand upon his heart in bed and say that. French for lace, dear ? Say it again.

' *Dentelle ?*

' Ha ! Dentelle ! Good-night, dear. Dentelle ! Den—telle.'

' *I afterwards,*' writes Caudle, ' *found out to my cost wherefore she inquired about lace. For she went out in the morning with the landlady to buy a veil, giving only four pounds for what she could have bought in England for forty shillings !* '

LECTURE XXVII

MRS. CAUDLE RETURNS TO HER NATIVE LAND. 'UNMANLY CRUELTY' OF CAUDLE, WHO HAS REFUSED 'TO SMUGGLE A FEW THINGS' FOR HER

HERE, it isn't often that I ask you to do anything for me, Mr. Caudle, goodness knows! and when I do, I'm always refused — of course. Oh yes! anybody but your own lawful wife. Every other husband aboard the boat could behave like a husband—but I was left to shift for myself. To be sure, that 's nothing new; I always am. Every other man, worthy to be called a man, could smuggle a few things for his wife—but I might as well be alone in the world. Not one poor half-dozen of silk stockings could you put in your hat for me; and everybody else was rolled in lace, and I don't know what. Eh? What, Mr. Caudle?

'*What do I want with silk stockings?*

'Well—it 's come to something now! There was a time, I believe, when I had a foot—yes, and an ankle, too; but when once a woman 's married, she has nothing of the sort; of course. No: I'm *not* a cherub, Mr. Caudle; don't say that. I know very well what I am.

'I dare say now, you'd have been delighted to smuggle for Miss Prettyman? Silk stockings become her!

'*You wish Miss Prettyman was in the moon?*

'Not you, Mr. Caudle; that 's only your art—your hypocrisy. A nice person too she'd be for the moon;

it would be none the brighter for her being in it, I know. And when you saw the Custom House officers look at me, as though they were piercing me through, what was your conduct? Shameful. You twittered about and fidgeted, and flushed up as if I really *was* a smuggler.

'*So I was?*

'What had that to do with it? It wasn't the part of a husband, I think, to fidget in that way, and show it.

MISS PRETTYMAN ON THE JETTY

'*You couldn't help it?*

'Humph! And you call yourself a person of strong mind, I believe? One of the lords of the creation! Ha! ha! couldn't help it!

'But I may do all I can to save the money, and this is always my reward. Yes, Mr. Caudle; I shall save a great deal.

'*How much?*

'I sha'n't tell you: I know your meanness—you'd want to stop it out of the house allowance. No: it 's nothing to you where I got the money from to buy so many things. The money was my own. Well, and if it was yours first, that 's nothing to do with it. No; I haven't saved it out of the puddings. But it 's always the woman who saves who 's despised. It 's only your fine-lady wives who're properly thought of. If I was to ruin you, Caudle, then you'd think something of me.

'I sha'n't go to sleep. It 's very well for you, who're no sooner in bed than you're fast as a church; but I can't sleep in that way. It 's my mind keeps me awake. And after all, I do feel so happy to-night, it 's very hard I can't enjoy my thoughts.

'*No: I can't think in silence!*

'There 's much enjoyment in that, to be sure! I've no doubt now you could listen to Miss Prettyman—oh, I don't care, I will speak. It was a little more than odd, I think, that she should be on the jetty when the boat came in. Ha! she'd been looking for you all the morning with a telescope, I've no doubt—she 's bold enough for anything. And then how she sneered and giggled when she saw me,—and said "how fat I'd got:" like her impudence, I think. What?

'*Well she might?*

'But I know what she wanted; yes—she'd have liked to have had me searched. She laughed on purpose.

'I only wish I'd taken two of the dear girls with me. What things I could have stitched about 'em! No—I'm not ashamed of myself to make my innocent children smugglers: the more innocent they looked, the better; but there you are with what you call your principles again; as if it wasn't given to everybody by nature to smuggle. I'm sure of it—it 's born with us. And nicely I've cheated 'em this day. Lace, and velvet, and silk stockings, and other things,—to say nothing of the tumblers and decanters. No: I didn't look as if I wanted a direction, for fear somebody should break me. That 's another of what you call

your jokes; but you should keep 'em for those who like 'em. I don't.

'*What have I made, after all?*

'I've told you—you shall never, never know. Yes, I know you'd been fined a hundred pounds if they'd searched me; but I never meant that they should. I daresay you wouldn't smuggle—oh no! you don't think it worth your while. You're quite a conjuror, you are, Caudle. Ha! ha! ha!

'*What am I laughing at?*

'Oh, you little know—such a clever creature! Ha! ha! Well, now, I'll tell you. I knew what an unaccommodating animal you were, so I made you smuggle whether or not.

'*How?*

'Why, when you were out at the *Café*, I got your great rough coat, and if I didn't stitch ten yards of best black velvet under the lining I'm a sinful woman! And to see how innocent you looked when the officers walked round and round you! It was a happy moment, Caudle, to see you.

'What do you call it?

'*A shameful trick—unworthy of a wife? I couldn't care much for you?*

'As if I didn't prove that by trusting you with ten yards of velvet. But I don't care what you say: I've saved everything—all but that beautiful English novel, that I've forgot the name of. And if they didn't take it out of my hand, and chopped it to bits like so much dog's-meat.

'*Served me right?*

'And when I so seldom buy a book! No: I don't see how it served me right. If you can buy the same book in France for four shillings that people here have the impudence to ask more than a guinea for—well, if they *do* steal it, that's their affair, not ours. As if there was anything in a book to steal!

'And now, Caudle, when are you going home? What?

'*Our time isn't up?*

'That's nothing to do with it. If we even lose a

week's lodging—and we mayn't do that—we shall save it again in living. But you're such a man! Your home's the last place with you. I'm sure I don't get a wink of a night, thinking what may happen. Three fires last night; and any one might as well have been at our house as not.

'A NEEDLE-CASE, THAT UNDER MY NOSE YOU GAVE TO MISS PRETTYMAN'

'*No—they mightn't?*

'Well, you know what I mean—but you're such a man!

'I'm sure, too, we've had quite enough of this place. But there 's no keeping you out of the libraries, Caudle.

You're getting quite a gambler. And I don't think it 's a nice example to set your children, raffling as you do for French clocks, and I don't know what. But that 's not the worst; you never win anything. Oh, I forgot. Yes; a needle-case, that under my nose you gave to Miss Prettyman. A nice thing for a married man to make presents: and to such a creature as that, too! A needle-case! I wonder whenever she has a needle in *her* hand!

'I know I shall feel ill with anxiety if I stop here. Nobody left in the house but that Mrs. Closepeg. And she is such a stupid woman. It was only last night that I dreamt I saw our cat quite a skeleton, and the canary stiff on its back at the bottom of the cage. You know, Caudle, I'm never happy when I'm away from home; and yet you will stay here. No, home 's my comfort! I never want to stir over the threshold, and you know it. If thieves were to break in, what could that Mrs. Closepeg do against 'em? And so, Caudle, you'll go home on Saturday? Our dear—dear home! On Saturday, Caudle?'

'*What I answered,*' says Caudle, '*I forget; but I know that on the Saturday we were once again shipped on board the "Red Rover."*'

LECTURE XXVIII

MRS. CAUDLE HAS RETURNED HOME. THE HOUSE (OF COURSE) 'NOT FIT TO BE SEEN.' MR. CAUDLE, IN SELF-DEFENCE, TAKES A BOOK

HOME! SWEET HOME!—MRS. CAUDLE'S RETURN

AFTER all, Caudle, it is something to get into one's own bed again. I *shall* sleep to-night. What! '*You're glad of it?*

'That 's like your sneering; I know what you mean. Of course; I never can think of making myself comfortable, but you wound my feelings. If you cared for your bed like any other man, you'd not have stayed out till this hour. Don't say that I drove you out of the house as soon as we came in it. I only just spoke about the dirt and the dust,—but the fact is, you'd be happy in a pig-sty! I thought I could have trusted that Mrs. Closepeg with untold gold; and did you only see the hearthrug? When we left home there was a tiger in it: I should like to know who could make

out the tiger, now ? Oh, it 's very well for you to swear at the tiger, but swearing won 't revive the rug again. Else you might swear.

' You could go out and make yourself comfortable at your club. You little know how many windows are broken. How many do you think ? No : I sha'n't tell you to-morrow—you shall know now. I'm sure ! Talking about getting health at Margate ; all my health went away directly I went into the kitchen. There 's dear mother 's china bowl cracked in two places. I could have sat down and cried when I saw it : a bowl I can recollect when I was a child. Eh ?

' *I should have locked it up, then ?*

' Yes : that 's your feeling for anything of mine. I only wish it had been your punch-bowl ; but, thank goodness ! I think that 's chipped.

' Well, you haven't answered about the windows—you can't guess how many ?

' *You don't care ?*

' Well, if nobody caught cold but you, it would be little matter. Six windows clean out, and three cracked !

' *You can't help it ?*

' I should like to know where the money 's to come from to mend 'em ! They sha'n't be mended, that 's all. Then you'll see how respectable the house will look. But I know very well what you think. Yes ; you're glad of it. You think that this will keep me at home—but I'll never stir out again. Then you can go to the seaside by yourself ; then, perhaps, you can be happy with Miss Prettyman ?—Now, Caudle, if you knock the pillow with your fist in that way, I'll get up. It 's very odd that I can't mention that person's name but you begin to fight the bolster, and do I don't know what. There must be something in it, or you wouldn't kick about so. A guilty conscience needs no—but you know what I mean.

' She wasn't coming to town for a week ; and then, of a sudden, she'd had a letter. I dare say she had. And then, as she said, it would be company for her to come with us. No doubt. She thought I should be ill

again, and down in the cabin, but with all her art, she does not know the depth of me—quite. Not but what I was ill; though, like a brute, you wouldn't see it.

'What do you say?

'*Good-night, love?*

'Yes: you can be very tender, I dare say—like all of your sex—to suit your own ends; but I can't go to sleep with my head full of the house. The fender in the parlour will never come to itself again. I haven't counted the knives yet, but I've made up my mind that half of 'em are lost. No: I don't always think the worst; no, and I don't make myself unhappy before the time; but of course that 's my thanks for caring about your property. If there aren't spiders in the curtains as big as nutmegs, I'm a wicked creature. Not a broom has the whole place seen since I've been away. But as soon as I get up, won't I rummage the house out, that 's all! I hadn't the heart to look at my pickles; but for all I left the door locked, I'm sure the jars have been moved. Yes; you can swear at pickles when you're in bed; but nobody makes more noise about 'em when you want 'em.

'I only hope they've been to the wine-cellar: then you may know what my feelings are. That poor cat, too——What?

'*You hate cats?*

'Yes, poor thing! because she 's my favourite—that 's it. If that cat could only speak——What?

'*It isn't necessary?*

'I don't know what you mean, Mr. Caudle: but if that cat could only speak, she'd tell me how she 's been cheated. Poor thing! I know where the money 's gone to that I left for her milk—I know. Why, what have you got there, Mr. Caudle? A book? What!

'*If you aren't allowed to sleep, you'll read?*

'Well, now it is come to something! If that isn't insulting a wife to bring a book to bed, I don't know what wedlock is. But you sha'n't read, Caudle; no, you sha'n't; not while I've strength to get up and put out a candle.

'And that's like your feelings! You can think a great deal of trumpery books; yes, you can't think too much of the stuff that 's put into print; but for what 's real and true about you, why, you've the heart of a stone. I should like to know what that book 's about. What!

'*Milton's "Paradise Lost"?*

'I thought some rubbish of the sort—something to insult me. A nice book, I think, to read in bed; and a very respectable person he was who wrote it.

'*What do I know of him?*

'Much more than you think. A very pretty fellow, indeed, with his six wives. What?

'*He hadn't six—he'd only three?*

'That 's nothing to do with it; but of course you'll take his part. Poor women! A nice time they had with him, I dare say! And I've no doubt, Mr. Caudle, you'd like to follow Mr. Milton's example; else you wouldn't read the stuff he wrote. But you don't use me as he treated the poor souls who married him. Poets, indeed! I'd make a law against any of 'em having wives, except upon paper; for goodness help the dear creatures tied to them! Like innocent moths lured by a candle! Talking of candles, you don't know that the lamp in the passage is split to bits! I say you don't —do you hear me, Mr. Caudle? Won't you answer? Do you know where you are? What?

'*In the Garden of Eden?*

'Are you? Then you've no business there at this time of night.'

'*And saying this,*' writes Caudle, '*she scrambled from the bed and put out the light.*'

LECTURE XXIX

MRS. CAUDLE THINKS 'THE TIME HAS COME TO HAVE A COTTAGE OUT OF TOWN'

OH, Caudle, you ought to have had something nice to-night; for you're not well, love—I know you're not. Ha! that's like you men—so headstrong! You will have it that nothing ails you; but I can tell, Caudle. The eye of a wife—and such a wife as I've been to you—can at once see whether a husband's well or not. You've been turning like tallow all the week; and what's more, you eat nothing now. It makes me melancholy to see you at a joint. I don't say anything at dinner before the children; but I don't feel the less. No, no; you're not very well; and you're not as strong as a horse. Don't deceive yourself—nothing of the sort. No, and you don't eat as much as ever: and if you do, you don't eat with a relish, I'm sure of that. You can't deceive me there.

'But I know what's killing you. It's the confinement; it's the bad air you breathe; it's the smoke of London. Oh yes, I know your old excuse: you never found the air bad before. Perhaps not. But as people grow older, and get on in trade—and, after all, we've nothing to complain of, Caudle—London air always disagrees with 'em. Delicate health comes with money: I'm sure of it. What a colour you had once, when you'd hardly a sixpence; and now, look at you!

''Twould add thirty years to your life—and think what a blessing that would be to me; not that I shall live a tenth part of the time—thirty years, if you'd take a nice little house somewhere at Brixton.

'*You hate Brixton?*

'I must say it, Caudle, that 's so like you: any plaee that 's really genteel you can't abide. Now Brixton and Baalam Hill I think delightful. So select! There, nobody visits nobody, unless they're somebody. To say nothing of the delightful pews that make the churehes so respeetable!

'However, do as you like. If you won't go to Brixton, what do you say to Clapham Common? Oh, that 's a very fine story! Never tell me! No; you wouldn't be left alone, a Robinson Crusoe with wife and children, beeause you're in the retail way. What?

'*The retired wholesales never visit the retired retails at Clapham?*

'Ha! that 's only your old sneering at the world, Mr. Caudle; but I don't believe it. And after all, people should keep to their station, or what was this life made for? Suppose a tallow-merchant does keep himself above a tallow-chandler,—I eall it only a proper pride. What?

'*You call it the aristocracy of fat?*

'I don't know what you mean by "aristoeraey"; but I suppose it 's only another of your dietionary words, that 's hardly worth the finding out.

'What do you say to Hornsey or Muswell Hill? Eh?

'*Too high?*

'What a man you are! Well, then—Battersea?

'*Too low?*

'You're an aggravating ereature, Caudle, you must own that! Hampstead, then?

'*Too cold?*

'Nonsense; it would brace you up like a drum, Caudle; and that 's what you want. But you don't deserve anybody to think of your health or your eomforts either. There's some pretty spots, I'm told, about Fulham. Now, Caudle, I won't have you say a word against Fulham. That must be a sweet plaee: dry and healthy, and every eomfort of life about it—else is it likely that a bishop would live there? Now, Caudle, none of your heathen prineiples—I won't hear 'em. I

think what satisfies a bishop ought to content you; but the politics you learn at that club are dreadful. To hear you talk of bishops—well, I only hope nothing will happen to you, for the sake of the dear children!

'A nice little house and a garden! I know it—I was born for a garden! There 's something about it makes one feel so innocent. My heart somehow always opens and shuts at roses. And then what nice currant wine we could make! And again, get 'em as fresh as you will, there 's no radishes like your own radishes! They're ten times as sweet! What?

'*And twenty times as dear?*

'Yes; there you go! Anything that I fancy, you always bring up the expense.

'No, Mr. Caudle, I should not be tired of it in a month. I tell you I was made for the country. But here you've kept me—and much you've cared about my health—here you've kept me in this filthy London, that I hardly know what grass is made of. Much you care for your wife and family to keep 'em here to be all smoked like bacon. I can see it—it 's stopping the children's growth; they'll be dwarfs, and have their father to thank for it. If you'd the heart of a parent, you couldn't bear to look at their white faces. Dear little Dick! he makes no breakfast. What?

'*He ate six slices this morning?*

'A pretty father you must be to count 'em. But that 's nothing to what the dear child could do, if, like other children, he'd a fair chance.

'Ha! and when we could be so comfortable! But it's always the case, you never will be comfortable with me. How nice and fresh you'd come up to business every morning; and what pleasure it would be for me to put a tulip or a pink in your button-hole, just, as I may say, to ticket you from the country.

'But then, Caudle, you never were like any other man! But I know why you won't leave London. Yes, I know. Then, you think, you couldn't go to your filthy club—that 's it. Then you'd be obliged to be at home, like any other decent man. Whereas you might, if you

liked, enjoy yourself under your own apple-tree, and I'm sure I should never say anything about your tobacco out of doors. My only wish is to make you happy, Caudle, and you won't let me do it.

'You don't speak, love? Shall I look about a house to-morrow? It will be a broken day with me, for I'm going out to have little pet's ears bored—— What?

'*You won't have her ears bored?*

'And why not, I should like to know?

MRS. CAUDLE'S MORNING DECORATION

'*It's a barbarous, savage custom?*

'Oh, Mr. Caudle! the sooner you go away from the world, and live in a eave, the better. You're getting not fit for Christian society. What next? My ears were bored and—— What?

'*So are yours?*

'I know what you mean—but that's nothing to do

with it. My ears, I say, were bored, and so were dear mother's, and grandmother's before her; and I suppose there were no more savages in our family than in yours, Mr. Caudle? Besides,—why should little pet's ears go naked any more than any of her sisters'? They wear carrings; you never objected before. What?

'*You've learned better now?*

'Yes, that 's all with your filthy politics again. You'd shake all the world up in a dice-box, if you'd your way: not that you care a pin about the world, only you'd like to get a better throw for yourself,—that 's all. But little pet *shall* be bored, and don't think to prevent it.

'I suppose she's to be married some day, as well as her sisters? And who'll look at a girl without earrings, I should like to know? If you knew anything of the world, you'd know what a nice diamond earring will sometimes do—when one can get it—before this. But I know why you can't abide earrings now: Miss Prettyman doesn't wear 'em; she would—I've no doubt—if she could only get 'em. Yes, it 's Miss Prettyman who——

'There, Caudle, now be quiet, and I'll say no more about pet's ears at present. We'll talk when you're reasonable. I don't want to put you out of temper, goodness knows! And so, love, about the cottage? What?

''*Twill be so far from business?*

'But it needn't be far, dearest. Quite a nice distance; so that on your late nights you may always be at home, have your supper, get to bed, and all by eleven. Eh,—sweet one?'

'*I don't know what I answered,*' says Caudle, '*but I know this: in less than a fortnight I found myself in a sort of a green bird-cage of a house, which my wife —gentle satirist—insisted upon calling "The Turtle Dovery."*'

LECTURE XXX

MRS. CAUDLE COMPLAINS OF THE 'TURTLE DOVERY.' DISCOVERS BLACK-BEETLES. THINKS IT 'NOTHING BUT RIGHT' THAT CAUDLE SHOULD SET UP A CHAISE

'TUSH! You'd never have got me into this wilderness of a place, Mr. Caudle, if I'd only have thought what it was. Yes, that's right: throw it in my teeth that it was my choice—that 's manly, isn't it? When I saw the place the sun was out, and it looked beautiful—now, it 's quite another thing. No, Mr. Caudle; I don't expect you to command the sun,—and if you talk about Joshua in that infidel way, I'll leave the bed. No, sir; I don't expect the sun to be in your power; but that 's nothing to do with it. I talk about one thing, and you always start another. But that 's your art.

'I'm sure a woman might as well be buried alive as live here. In fact, I am buried alive; I feel it. I stood at the window three hours this blessed day, and saw nothing but the postman. No: it isn't a pity that I hadn't something better to do; I had plenty: but that 's my business, Mr. Caudle. I suppose I'm to be mistress of my own house? If not, I'd better leave it.

'And the very first night we were here, you know it, the black-beetles came into the kitchen. If the place didn't seem spread all over with a black cloth, I'm a story-teller. What are you coughing at, Mr. Caudle? I see nothing to cough at. But that 's just your way of

sneering. Millions of blaek-beetles! And as the clock strikes eight, out they march. What?

'*They're very punctual?*

'I know that. I only wish other people were half as punetual: 'twould save other people's money and other

MRS. CAUDLE VISITS THE KITCHEN—'MILLIONS OF BLACK-BEETLES!'

people's peaee of mind. You know I hate a black-beetle! No: I don't hate so many things. But I do hate blaek-beetles, as I hate ill-treatment, Mr. Caudle. And now I have enough of both, goodness knows!

'Last night they eame into the parlour. Of course,

in a night or two, they'll walk up into the bedroom. They'll be here—regiments of 'em—on the quilt. But what do you care? Nothing of the sort ever touches you: but you know how they come to me; and that 's why you're so quiet. A pleasant thing to have black-beetles in one's bed!

'*Why don't I poison 'em?*

'A pretty matter, indeed, to have poison in the

'YOU KNOW I HATE A BLACK-BEETLE!'

house! Much you must think of the dear children. A nice place, too, to be called the Turtle Dovery!

'*Didn't I christen it myself?*

'I know that,—but then, I knew nothing of the black-beetles. Besides, names of houses are for the world outside; not that anybody passes to see ours. Didn't Mrs. Digby insist on calling their new house

'Love-in-Idleness,' though everybody knew that that wretch Digby was always beating her? Still, when folks read 'Rose Cottage' on the wall, they seldom think of the lots of thorns that are inside. In this world, Mr. Caudle, names are sometimes quite as good as things.

'That cough again! You've got a cold, and you'll always be getting one—for you'll always be missing the omnibus as you did on Tuesday,—and always be getting wet. No constitution can stand it, Caudle. You don't know what I felt when I heard it rain on Tuesday, and thought you might be in it. What?

'*I'm very good?*

'Yes, I trust so: I try to be so, Caudle. And so, dear, I've been thinking that we'd better keep a chaise.

'*You can't afford it, and you won't?*

'Don't tell me: I know you'd save money by it. I've been reckoning what you lay out in omnibuses; and if you'd a chaise of your own—besides the gentility of the thing—you'd be money in pocket. And then, again, how often I could go with you to town,—and how, again, I could call for you when you liked to be a little late at the club, dear! Now you're obliged to be hurried away, I know it, when, if you'd only a carriage of your own, you could stay and enjoy yourself. And after your work you want enjoyment. Of course, I can't expect you always to run home directly to me: and I don't, Caudle; and you know it.

'A nice, neat, elegant little chaise. What?

'*You'll think of it?*

'There 's a love! You are a good creature, Caudle; and 'twill make me so happy to think you don't depend upon an omnibus. A sweet little carriage, with our own arms beautifully painted on the panels. What?

'*Arms are rubbish; and you don't know that you have any?*

'Nonsense: to be sure you have—and if not, of course they're to be had for money. I wonder where Chalkpit's, the milkman's arms, came from? I suppose you can buy 'em at the same place. He used to drive a green cart; and now he's got a close yellow carriage,

with two large tortoise-shell cats, with their whiskers as if dipped in cream, standing on their hind legs upon each door, with a heap of Latin underneath. You may buy the carriage if you please, Mr. Caudle; but unless your arms are there, you won't get me to enter it. Never! I'm not going to look less than Mrs. Chalkpit.

'Besides, if you haven't arms, I'm sure my family have, and a wife's arms are quite as good as a husband's. I'll write to-morrow to dear mother, to know what we took for our family arms. What do you say? What?

'*A mangle in a stone kitchen proper?*

'Mr. Caudle, you're always insulting my family—always: but you shall not put me out of temper to-night. Still, if you don't like our arms, find your own. I daresay you could have found 'em fast enough, if you'd married Miss Prettyman. Well, I will be quiet; and I won't mention that lady's name. A nice lady she is! I wonder how much she spends in paint! Now, don't I tell you I won't say a word more, and yet you will kick about!

'Well, we'll have the carriage and the family arms? No, I don't want the family legs too. Don't be vulgar, Mr. Caudle. You might, perhaps, talk in that way before you'd money in the Bank; but it doesn't at all become you now. The carriage and the family arms! We've a country house as well as the Chalkpits! and though they praise their place for a little paradise, I dare say they've quite as many black-beetles as we have, and more too. The place quite looks it.

'Our carriage and our arms! And you know, love, it won't cost much—next to nothing—to put a gold band about Sam's hat on a Sunday. No: I don't want a full-blown livery. At least, not just yet. I'm told that Chalkpits dress their boy on a Sunday like a dragon-fly; and I don't see why we shouldn't do what we like with our own Sam. Nevertheless, I'll be content with a gold band, and a bit of pepper-and-salt. No; I shall not cry out for plush next; certainly not. But I will have a gold band, and——

'*You won't; and I know it?*

'Oh yes! that 's another of your crotchets, Mr. Caudle; like nobody else—you don't love liveries. I suppose when people buy their sheets, or their table-cloths, or any other linen, they've a right to mark what they like upon it, haven't they? Well, then? You buy a servant, and you mark what you like upon him, and where 's the difference? None, that *I* can see.'

'*Finally*,' says Caudle, '*I compromised for a gig; but Sam did not wear pepper-and-salt and a gold band.*'

LECTURE XXXI

MRS. CAUDLE COMPLAINS VERY BITTERLY THAT MR. CAUDLE HAS 'BROKEN HER CONFIDENCE.'

YOU'LL catch me, Mr. Caudle, telling you anything again. Now, I don't want to have any noise: I don't wish you to put yourself in a passion. All I say is this; never again do I open my lips to you about anybody. No: if man and wife can't be one, why there 's an end of everything. Oh, you know well what I mean, Mr. Caudle: you've broken my confidence in the most shameful, the most heartless way, and I repeat it—I can never be again to you as I have been. No: the little charm—it wasn't much—that remained about

married life, is gone for ever. Yes; the bloom 's quite wiped off the plum now.

'Don't be such a hypocrite, Caudle; don't ask me what I mean! Mrs. Badgerly has been here—more like a fiend, I'm sure, than a quiet woman. I haven't done trembling yet! You know the state of my nerves too; you know—yes, sir, I *had* nerves when you married me; and I haven't just found 'em out. Well, you've something to answer for, I think. The Badgerlys are going to separate: she takes the girls, and he the boys, and all through you. How you can lay your head upon that pillow and think of going to sleep, I can't tell.

'*What have you done?*

'Well, you have a face to ask the question. Done? You've broken my confidence, Mr. Caudle: you've taken advantage of my tenderness, my trust in you as a wife—the more fool I for my pains!—and you've separated a happy couple for ever. No; I'm not talking in the clouds; I'm talking in your bed, the more my misfortune.

'Now, Caudle—yes, I shall sit up in the bed if I choose; I'm not going to sleep till I have this properly explained; for Mrs. Badgerly sha'n't lay her separation at my door. You won't deny that you were at the club last night? No, bad as you are, Caudle—and though you're my husband, I can't think you a good man; I try to do, but I can't—bad as you are, you can't deny you were at the club. What?

'*You don't deny it?*

'That 's what I say—you can't. And now answer me this question. What did you say—before the whole world—of Mr. Badgerly's whiskers? There 's nothing to laugh at, Caudle; if you'd have seen that poor woman to-day, you'd have a heart of stone to laugh. What did you say of his whiskers? Didn't you tell everybody he dyed 'em? Didn't you hold the candle up to 'em, as you said, to show the purple?

'*To be sure you did?*

'Ha! people who break jokes never care about breaking hearts. Badgerly went home like a demon;

called his wife a false woman: vowed he'd never enter a bed again with her, and to show he was in earnest, slept all night upon the sofa. He said it was the dearest secret of his life; said she had told me; and that I had told you; and that 's how it has come out. What do you say?

'*Badgerly was right. I did tell you?*

MR. AND MRS. BADGERLY

'I know I did: but when dear Mrs. Badgerly mentioned the matter to me and a few friends, as we were all laughing at tea together, quite in a confidential way —when she just spoke of her husband's whiskers, and how long he was over 'em every morning—of course, poor soul! she never thought it was to be talked of in the world again. Eh?

'*Then I had no right to tell you of it?*

'And that 's the way I'm thanked for my confidence. Because I don't keep a secret from you, but show you, I may say, my naked soul, Caudle, that 's how I'm rewarded. Poor Mrs. Badgerly—for all her hard words—after she went away, I'm sure my heart quite bled for her. What do you say, Mr. Caudle?

'*Serves her right—she should hold her tongue?*

'Yes; that 's like your tyranny—you'd never let a poor woman speak. Eh—what, what, Mr. Caudle?

'That 's a very fine speech, I dare say; and wives are very much obliged to you, only there 's not a bit of truth in it. No, we women don't get together, and pick our husbands to pieces, just as sometimes mischievous little girls rip up their dolls. That 's an old sentiment of yours, Mr. Caudle; but I'm sure you've no occasion to say it of me. I hear a good deal of other people's husbands, certainly; I can't shut my ears; I wish I could: but I never say anything about you,—and I might, and you know it—and there 's somebody else that knows it, too. No: I sit still and say nothing; what I have in my own bosom about you, Caudle, will be buried with me. But I know what you think of wives. I heard you talking to Mr. Prettyman, when you little thought I was listening, and you didn't know much what you were saying—I heard you. "My dear Prettyman," says you, "when some women get talking, they club all their husbands' faults together; just as children club their cakes and apples, to make a common feast for the whole set." Eh?

'*You don't remember it?*

'But I do: and I remember, too, what brandy was left when Prettyman left. 'Twould be odd if you could remember much about it, after that.

'And now you've gone and separated man and wife, and I'm to be blamed for it. You've not only carried misery into a family, but broken my confidence. You've proved to me that henceforth I'm not to trust you with anything, Mr. Caudle. No; I'll lock up whatever I

know in my own breast,—for now I find nobody, not even one's own husband, is to be relied upon. From this moment, I may look upon myself as a solitary woman. Now, it 's no use your trying to go to sleep. What do you say ?

' *You know that ?*

' Very well. Now I want to ask you one question more. Eh ?

' *You want to ask me one ?*

' Very well—go on—I'm not afraid to be catechised. I never dropped a syllable that as a wife I ought to have kept to myself—no, I'm not at all forgetting what I've said—and whatever you've got to ask me speak out at once. No—I don't want you to spare me ; all I want you is to speak.

' *You will speak ?*

' Well then, do.

' What ?

' *Who told people you'd a false front tooth ?*

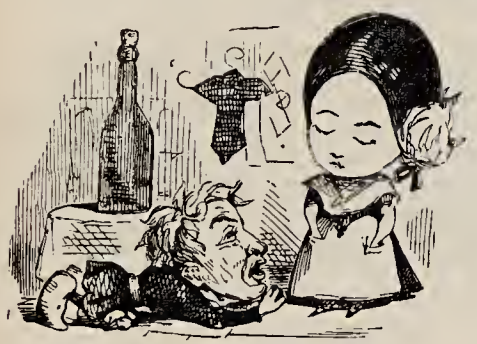
' And is that all ? Well, I'm sure—as if the world couldn't see it. I know I did just mention it once, but then I thought everybody knew it—besides, I was aggravated to do it ; yes, aggravated. I remember it was that very day, at Mrs. Badgerly's, when husbands' whiskers came up. Well, after we 'd done with them, somebody said something about teeth. Whereupon, Miss Prettyman—a minx ! she was born to destroy the peace of families, I know she was : she was there ; and if I'd only known that such a creature was—no I'm not rambling, not at all, and I'm coming to the tooth. To be sure, this is a great deal you've got against me, isn't it ? Well, somebody spoke about teeth, when Miss Prettyman, with one of her insulting leers, said " she thought Mr. Caudle had the whitest teeth she ever *had* beheld." Of course my blood was up—every wife's would be : and I believe I might have said, "Yes, they were well enough ; but when a young lady so very much praised a married man's teeth, she perhaps didn't know that one of the front ones was an elephant's." Like her impudence !—I set *her* down for the rest of the evening.

But I can see the humour you're in to-night. You only came to bed to quarrel, and I'm not going to indulge you. All I say is this, after the shameful mischief you've made at the Badgerlys', you never break my confidence again. Never—and now you know it.'

Caudle hereupon writes—'*And here she seemed inclined to sleep. Not for one moment did I think to prevent her.*'

LECTURE XXXII

MRS. CAUDLE DISCOURSES OF MAIDS-OF-ALL-WORK AND MAIDS IN GENERAL. MR. CAUDLE'S 'INFAMOUS BEHAVIOUR' TEN YEARS AGO



ERE now, it isn't my intention to say a word to-night, Mr. Caudle. No; I want to go to sleep, if I can; for after what I've gone through to-day, and with the headache I've got,—and if I haven't left my smelling-salts on the mantelpiece, on the right-hand corner just as you go into the room—nobody could miss it—I say, nobody could miss it—in a little green bottle, and—— well, there you lie like a stone, and I might perish and you wouldn't move. Oh, my poor head! But it may open and shut, and what do you care?

'Yes, that 's like your feeling, just. I want my salts, and you tell me there 's nothing like being still for a headache. Indeed? But I'm not going to be still; so don't you think it. That 's just how a woman 's put upon. But I know your aggravation—I know your art. You think to keep me quiet about that minx Kitty,—your favourite, sir! Upon my life, I'm not to discharge my own servant without—but she shall go. If I had to do all the work myself, she shouldn't stop under my roof. I can see how she looks down upon me. I can see a great deal, Mr. Caudle, that I never choose to open my lips about—but I can't shut my eyes. Perhaps it would have been better for my peace of mind if I always could. Don't say that. I'm not a foolish woman, and I know very well what I'm saying. I suppose you think I forget *that* Rebecca? I know it 's ten years ago that she lived with us—but what 's that to do with it? Things aren't the less true for being old, I suppose. No; and your conduct, Mr. Caudle, at that time—if it was a hundred years ago—I should never forget. What?

'*I shall always be the same silly woman?*

'I hope I shall—I trust I shall always have my eyes about me in my own house. Now, don't think of going to sleep, Caudle; because, as you've brought this up about that Rebecca, you shall hear me out. Well, I do wonder that you can name her! Eh?

'*You didn't name her?*

'That 's nothing at all to do with it; for I know just as well what you think, as if you did. I suppose you'll say that you didn't drink a glass of wine to her?

'*Never?*

'So you said at the time, but I've thought of it for ten long years, and the more I've thought the surer I am of it. And at that very time—if you please to recollect—at that very time little Jack was a baby. I shouldn't have so much cared but for that; but he was hardly running alone, when you nodded and drank a glass of wine to that creature. No; I'm not mad, and I'm not dreaming. I saw how you did it,—and the

hypocrisy made it worse and worse. I saw you when the creature was just behind my chair; you took up a glass of wine, and saying to me, "Margaret," and then lifting up your eyes at the bold minx, and saying "my dear," as if you wanted me to believe that you spoke only to me, when I could see you laugh at her behind me. And at that time little Jack wasn't on his feet.

'YOU NODDED AND DRANK A GLASS OF WINE TO THAT CREATURE'

What do you say?

'*Heaven forgive me?*

'Ha! Mr. Caudle, it's you that ought to ask for that: I'm safe enough, I am: it's you who should ask to be forgiven.

'No, I wouldn't slander a saint—and I didn't take away the girl's character for nothing. I know she

brought an action for what I said; and I know you had to pay damages for what you call my tongue—I well remember all that. And serve you right; if you hadn't laughed at her, it wouldn't have happened. But if you will make free with such people, of course you're sure to suffer for it. 'Twould have served you right if the lawyer's bill had been double. Damages, indeed! Not that anybody's tongue could have damaged her!

'And now Mr. Caudle, you're the same man you were ten years ago. What?

'*You hope so?*

'The more shame for you. At your time of life, with all your children growing up about you, to——

'*What am I talking of?*

'I know very well; and so would you, if you had any conscience, which you haven't. When I say I shall discharge Kitty, you say she 's a very good servant, and I sha'n't get a better. But I know why you think her good; you think her pretty, and that 's enough for you; as if girls who work for their bread have any business to be pretty,—which she isn't. Pretty servants, indeed! going mincing about with their fal-lal faces, as if even the flies would spoil 'em. But I know what a bad man you are—now, it 's no use your denying it; for didn't I overhear you talking to Mr. Prettyman, and didn't you say that you couldn't bear to have ugly servants about you? I ask you,—didn't you say that?

'*Perhaps you did?*

'You don't blush to confess it? If your principles, Mr. Caudle, aren't enough to make a woman's blood run cold!

'Oh, yes! you've talked that stuff again and again; and once I might have believed it; but I know a little more of you now. You like to see pretty servants, just as you like to see pretty statues, and pretty pictures, and pretty flowers, and anything in nature that 's pretty, just, as you say, for the eye to feed upon. Yes; I know your eyes,—very well. I know what they were ten years ago; for shall I ever forget that glass of wine when little Jack was in arms? I don't care if it was

a thousand years ago, it 's as fresh as yesterday, and I never will cease to talk of it. When you know me, how can you ask it ?

'And now you insist upon keeping Kitty, when there 's no having a bit of crockery for her ? That girl would break the Bank of England—I know she would —if she was to put her hand upon it. But what 's a whole set of blue china to her beautiful blue eyes ?

MRS. CAUDLE DISCHARGES 'KITTY'

I know that 's what you mean, though you don't say it.

'Oh, you needn't lie groaning there, for you don't think I shall ever forget Rebecca. Yes,—it 's very well for you to swear at Rebecca now,—but you didn't swear at her then, Mr. Caudle, I know. "Margaret, my dear!" Well, how you can have the face to look at me——

'*You don't look at me ?*

'The more shame for you.

'I can only say, that either Kitty leaves the house, or I do. Which is it to be, Mr. Caudle? Eh?

'*You don't care? Both?*

'But you're not going to get rid of me in that manner, I can tell you. But for that trollop—now, you may swear and rave as you like——

'*You don't intend to say a word more?*

'Very well; it's no matter what you say—her quarter's up on Tuesday, and go she shall. A soup-plate and a basin went yesterday.

'A soup-plate and a basin, and when I've the head-ache as I have, Mr. Caudle, tearing me to pieces! But I shall never be well in this world—never. A soup-plate and a basin!'

'*She slept,*' writes Caudle, '*and poor Kitty left on Tuesday.*'

LECTURE XXXIII

MRS. CAUDLE HAS DISCOVERED THAT CAUDLE IS A RAILWAY DIRECTOR

MR. CAUDLE READS THE SHARE LIST

WHEN I took up the paper to-day, Caudle, you might have knocked me down with a feather! Now, don't be a hypocrite — you know what's the matter. And when you haven't a bed to lie upon, and are brought to sleep upon coal sacks—and then I can tell you, Mr. Caudle, you may sleep by yourself—then you'll know what 's the matter. Now, I've seen your name, and don't deny it. Yes,—the Eel-Pie Island Railway—and among the Directors, Job Caudle, Esq., of the Turtle Dovery, and —no, I won't be quiet. It isn't often—goodness knows! —that I speak ; but seeing what I do, I won't be silent.

'*What do I see?*

'Why, there, Mr. Caudle, at the foot of the bed, I see all the blessed children in tatters—I see you in a gaol, and the carpets hung out of the windows.

'And now I know why you talk in your sleep about a broad and narrow gauge! I couldn't think what was on your mind—but now it 's out. Ha! Mr. Caudle, there 's something about a broad and narrow way that I wish you'd remember—but you're turned quite a heathen: yes, you think of nothing but money now.

'*Don't I like money?*

'To be sure I do; but then I like it when I'm certain of it; no risks for me. Yes, it 's all very well to talk about fortunes made in no time: they're like shirts made in no time—it 's ten to one if they hang long together.

'And now it 's plain enough why you can't eat or drink, or sleep, or do anything. All your mind 's allotted into railways; for you shan't make me believe that Eel-Pie Island 's the only one. Oh, no! I can see by the looks of you. Why, in a little time, if you haven't as many lines in your face as there are lines laid down! Every one of your features seems cut up—and all seem travelling from one another. Six months ago, Caudle, you hadn't a wrinkle; yes, you'd a cheek as smooth as any china, and now your face is like the Map of England.

'At your time of life, too! You, who were for always going small and sure! You to make heads-and-tails of your money in this way! It 's that stock-broker's dog at Flam Cottage—he's bitten you, I'm sure of it. You're not fit to manage your own property now; and I should only be acting the part of a good wife if I were to call in the mad-doctors.

'Well, I shall never know rest any more now. There won't be a soul knock at the door after this that I sha'n't think it 's the man coming to take possession. 'Twill be something for the Chalkpits to laugh at when we're sold up. I think I see 'em here, bidding for all our little articles of bigotry and virtue, and—what are you laughing at?

'*They're not bigotry and virtue; but bijouterie and vertu?*

'It 's all the same: only you're never so happy as when you're taking me up.

'If I can tell what 's coming to the world, I'm a sinner! Everybody 's for turning their farthings into double sovereigns and cheating their neighbours of the balance. And you, too—you're beside yourself, Caudle—I'm sure of it. I've watched you when you thought me fast asleep. And then you've lain, and whispered and whispered, and then hugged yourself, and laughed at the bed-posts, as if you'd seen 'em turned to sovereign gold. I do believe that you sometimes think the patch-work quilt is made of thousand-pound bank-notes.

'Well, when we're brought to the Union, then you'll find out your mistake. But it will be a poor satisfaction for me every night to tell you of it. What, Mr. Caudle?

'*They won't let me tell you of it?*

'And you call that 'some comfort'? And after the wife I've been to you! But now I recollect. I think I've heard you praise that Union before; though, like a fond fool as I've always been, I never once suspected the reason of it.

'And now, of course, day and night, you'll never be at home. No, you'll live and sleep at Eel-Pie Island! I shall be left alone with nothing but my thoughts, thinking when the broker will come, and you'll be with your brother directors. I may slave and I may toil to save sixpences; and you'll be throwing away hundreds. And then the expensive tastes you've got! Nothing good enough for you now. I'm sure you sometimes think yourself King Solomon. But that comes of making money—if, indeed, you have made any—without earning it. No; I don't talk nonsense: people *can* make money without earning it. And when they do, why it 's like taking a lot of spirits at one draught; it gets into their head, and they don't know what they're about. And you're in that state now, Mr. Caudle: I'm sure of it, by the way of you. There 's a tipsiness of the pocket as well as of the stomach—and you're in that condition at this very moment.

'Not that I should so much mind—that is, if you *have* made money—if you'd stop at the Eel-Pie line. But I know what these things are: they're like treacle

to flies : when men are well in 'em, they can't get out of 'em : or, if they do, it 's often without a feather to fly with. No : if you've really made money by the Eel-Pie line, and will give it to me to take care of for the dear children, why, perhaps, love, I'll say no more of the matter. What ?

'*Nonsense ?*

'Yes, of course : I never ask you for money, but that 's the word.

'And now, catch you stopping at the Eel-Pie line ! Oh no ; I know your aggravating spirit. In a day or two I shall see another fine flourish in the paper, with a proposal for a branch from Eel-Pie Island to the Chelsea Bun-house. Give you a mile of rail, and—I know you men—you'll take a hundred. Well, if it didn't make me quiver to read that stuff in the paper, —and your name to it ! But I suppose it was Mr. Prettyman's work; for his precious name 's among 'em. How you tell the people "that eel-pies are now become an essential element of civilisation"—I learnt all the words by heart, that I might say 'em to you—"that the Eastern population of London are cut off from the blessings of such a necessary—and that by means of the projected line eel-pies will be brought home to the business and bosoms of Ratcliff Highway and the adjacent dependencies." Well, when you men—lords of the creation, as you call yourselves—do get together to make up a company, or anything of the sort—is there any story-book can come up to you ? And so you look solemnly in one another's faces, and, never so much as moving the corners of your mouths, pick one another's pockets. No, I'm not using hard words, Mr. Caudle—but only the words that 's proper.

'And this I *must* say. Whatever you've got, I'm none the better for it. You never give me any of your Eel-Pie shares. What do you say ?

'*You will give me some ?*

'Not I—I'll have nothing to do with any wickedness of the kind. If, like any other husband, you choose to throw a heap of money into my lap—what ?

'*You'll think of it? When the Eel-Pies go up?*
'Then I know what they're worth—they'll never fetch a farthing.'

'*She was suddenly silent*'—writes Caudle—'*and I was sinking into sleep, when she elbowed me, and cried, "Caudle, do you think they'll be up to-morrow?"*'

LECTURE XXXIV

MRS. CAUDLE, SUSPECTING THAT MR. CAUDLE HAS MADE HIS WILL, IS 'ONLY ANXIOUS, AS A WIFE,' TO KNOW ITS PROVISIONS

HERE, I always said you'd a strong mind when you liked, Caudle; and what you've just been doing proves it. Some people won't make a will, because they think they must die directly afterwards. Now, you're above that, love, aren't you? Nonsense; you know very well what I mean. I know your will 's made, for Scratcherly told me so. What?

'*You don't believe it?*

'Well, I'm sure! That 's a pretty thing for a man to say to his wife. I know he 's too much of a man of business to talk; but I suppose there 's a way of telling things without speaking them. And when I put the question to him, lawyer as he is, he hadn't the face to deny it.

'To be sure, it can be of no consequence to me whether your will is made or not. I shall not be alive, Mr. Caudle, to want anything: I shall be provided for

a long time before your will 's of any use. No, Mr. Caudle, I sha'n't survive you: and—though a woman 's wrong to let her affection for a man be known, for then she 's always taken advantage of—though I know it 's foolish and weak to say so, still I don't want to survive you. How should I? No, no; don't say that: I'm not good for a hundred—I sha'n't see you out, and another husband too. What a gross idea, Caudle! To

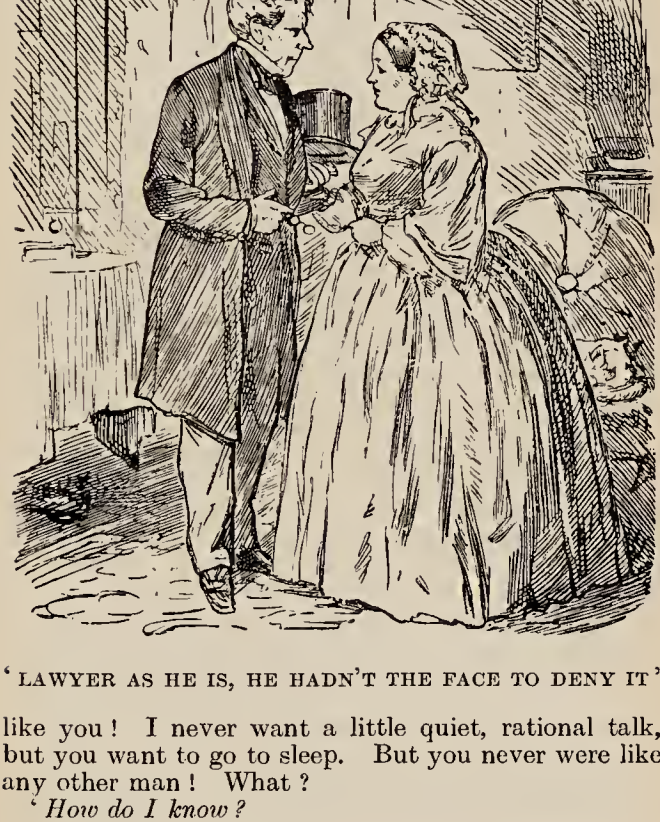
MR. CAUDLE SENDS FOR HIS LAWYER

imagine I'd ever think of marrying again. No—never! What?

'*That 's what we all say?*

'Not at all; quite the reverse. To me the very idea of such a thing is horrible, and always was. Yes, I know very well that some do marry again—but what they're made of, I'm sure I can't tell. Ugh!

'There are men, I know, who leave their property in such a way that their widows, to hold it, must keep widows. Now, if there is anything in the world that is mean and small, it is that. Don't you think so, too, Caudle? Why don't you speak, love? That 's so



'LAWYER AS HE IS, HE HADN'T THE FACE TO DENY IT'

like you! I never want a little quiet, rational talk, but you want to go to sleep. But you never were like any other man! What?

'*How do I know?*

'There now—that 's so like your aggravating way.

I never open my lips upon a subject but you try to put me off. I've no doubt when Miss Prettyman speaks, you can answer *her* properly enough. There you are, again! Upon my life, it *is* odd; but I never can in the most innocent way mention that person's name that——

'*Why can't I leave her alone?*

'I'm sure—with all my heart! Who wants to talk about her? I don't: only you always will say something that 's certain to bring up her name.

'What was I saying, Caudle? Oh, about the way some men bind their widows. To my mind, there is nothing so little. When a man forbids his wife to marry again without losing what he leaves—it 's what I call selfishness after death. Mean to a degree! It 's like taking his wife into the grave with him. Eh?

'*You never want to do that?*

'No, I'm sure of that, love: you're not the man to tie a woman up in that mean manner. A man who'd do that would have his widow burnt with him, if he could—just as those monsters, that call themselves men, do in the Indies.

'However, it 's no matter to me how you've made your will; but it may be to your second wife. What?

'*I shall never give you a chance?*

'Ha! you don't know my constitution after all, Caudle. I'm not at all the woman I was. I say nothing about 'em, but very often you don't know my feelings. And as we're on the subject, dearest, I have only one favour to ask. When you marry again—now it 's no use your saying that. After the comforts you've known of marriage—what are you sighing at, dear?—after the comforts, you must marry again—now don't forswear yourself in that violent way, taking an oath that you know you must break—you couldn't help it, I'm sure of it; and I know you better than you know yourself. Well, all I ask is, love, because it 's only for your sake, and it would make no difference to me then—how should it?—but all I ask is, don't marry Miss Pret—— There! there! I've done: I won't say

another word about it; but all I ask is, don't. After the way you've been thought of, and after the comforts you've been used to, Caudle, she wouldn't be the wife for you. Of course I could then have no interest in the matter—you might marry the Queen of England, for what it would be to me then—I'm only anxious about you. Mind, Caudle, I'm not saying anything against her; not at all; but there 's a flightiness in her manner—I dare say, poor thing, she means no harm, and it may be, as the saying is, only her manner after all—still, there *is* a flightiness about her that, after what you've been used to, would make you very wretched. Now, if I may boast of anything, Caudle, it is my propriety of manner the whole of my life. I know that wives who're very particular aren't thought as well of as those who're not—still, it 's next to nothing to be virtuous, if people don't seem so. And virtue, Caudle—no, I'm not going to preach about virtue, for I never do. No; and I don't go about with my virtue, like a child with a drum, making all sorts of noises with it. But I know your principles. I shall never forget what I once heard you say to Prettyman: and it 's no excuse that you'd taken so much wine you didn't know what you were saying at the time; for wine brings out man's wickedness, just as fire brings out spots of grease.

'*What did you say?*

'Why, you said this:—"Virtue's a beautiful thing in women, when they don't make so much noise about it; but there 's some women who think virtue was given 'em, as claws were given to cats"—yes, cats was the word—"to do nothing but scratch with." That 's what you said.

'*You don't recollect a syllable of it?*

'No, that 's it; when you're in that dreadful state, you recollect nothing: but it 's a good thing I do.

'But we won't talk of that, love—that 's all over: I dare say you meant nothing. But I'm glad you agree with me, that the man who'd tie up his widow not to marry again, is a mean man. It makes me happy that you've the confidence in me to say that.

'*You never said it?*

'That 's nothing to do with it—you've just as good as said it. No: when a man leaves all his property to his wife, without binding her hands from marrying again, he shows what a dependence he has upon her love. He proves to all the world what a wife she's been to him; and how, after his death, he knows she'll grieve for him. And then, of course, a second marriage never enters her head. But when she only keeps his money so long as she keeps a widow, why, she's aggravated to take another husband. I'm sure of it; many a poor woman has been driven into wedlock again, only because she was spited into it by her husband's will. It 's only natural to suppose it. If I thought, Caudle, you could do such a thing, though it would break my heart to do it,—yet, though you were dead and gone, I'd show you I'd a spirit, and marry again directly. Not but what it 's ridiculous my talking in such a way, as I shall go long before you; still, mark my words, and don't provoke me with any will of that sort, or I'd do it—as I'm a living woman in this bed to-night, I'd do it.'

'*I did not contradict her,*' says Caudle, '*but suffered her to slumber in such assurance.*'

LECTURE XXXV

MRS. CAUDLE 'HAS BEEN TOLD' THAT CAUDLE HAS 'TAKEN TO PLAY' AT BILLIARDS

'OH, you're very late to-night, dear.

'*It 's not late?*

'Well, then, it isn't, that 's all. Of course, a woman can never tell when it 's late. You were late on Tuesday, too; a little late on the Friday before; on the Wednesday before that—now, you needn't twist about in that manner; I'm not going to say anything—no; for I see it 's now no use. Once, I own, it used to fret me when you stayed out; but that 's all over: you've now brought me to that state, Caudle—and it 's your own fault entirely—that I don't care whether you ever come home or not. I never thought I could be brought to think so little of you; but you've done it: you've been treading on the worm for these twenty years, and it 's turned at last.

'Now, I'm not going to quarrel; that 's all over: I don't feel enough for you to quarrel with,—I don't, Caudle, as true as I'm in this bed. All I want of you is—any other man would speak to his wife, and not lie there like a log—all I want is this. Just tell me where you were on Tuesday? You were not at dear mother's, though you know she 's not well, and you know she thinks of leaving the dear children her money; but you never had any feeling for anybody belonging to me. And you were not at your Club: no, I know that. And you were not at any theatre.

'*How do I know?*

'Ha, Mr. Caudle! I only wish I didn't know. No; you were not at any of these places; but I know well enough where you were.

'*Then why do I ask if I know?*

'That 's it: just to prove what a hypocrite you are: just to show you that you can't deceive me.

'So, Mr. Caudle,—you've turned billiard-player, sir.

'*Only once?*

'That 's quite enough: you might as well play a thousand times; for you're a lost man, Caudle. Only once, indeed! I wonder, if I was to say "Only once," what would you say to me? But, of course, a man can do no wrong in anything.

'And you're a lord of the creation, Mr. Caudle; and you can stay away from the comforts of your blessed fireside, and the society of your own wife and children—though, to be sure, you never thought anything of them—to push ivory balls about with a long stick upon a green table-cloth. What pleasure any man can take in such stuff must astonish any sensible woman. I pity you, Caudle!

'And you can go and do nothing but make "cannons"—for that 's the gibberish they talk at billiards—when there 's the manly and athletic game of cribbage, as my poor grandmother used to call it, at your own hearth. You can go into a billiard-room—you, a respectable tradesman, or as you set yourself up for one, for if the world knew all, there 's very little respectability in you—you can go and play billiards with a set of creatures in mustachios, when you might take a nice quiet hand with me at home. But no! anything but cribbage with your own wife!

'Caudle, it 's all over now; you've gone to destruction. I never knew a man enter a billiard-room that he wasn't lost for ever. There was my uncle Wardle; a better man never broke the bread of life: he took to billiards, and he didn't live with aunt a month afterwards.

'*A lucky fellow?*

'And that 's what you call a man who leaves his wife—a 'lucky fellow'? But, to be sure, what can I expect? We shall not be together long, now: it 's been

some time coming, but, at last, we must separate: and the wife I've been to you!

'But I know who it is; it's that fiend Prettyman. I *will* call him a fiend, and I'm by no means a foolish woman: you'd no more have thought of billiards than a goose, if it hadn't been for him. Now, it's no use, Caudle, your telling me that you have only been once, and that you can't hit a ball anyhow—you'll soon get

MR. CAUDLE 'TAKES TO BILLIARDS'

over all that; and then you'll never be at home. You'll be a marked man, Caudle; yes, marked: there'll be something about you that'll be dreadful; for if I couldn't tell a billiard-player by his looks, I've no eyes, that's all. They all of 'em look as yellow as parchment, and wear mustachios—I suppose you'll let yours grow now; though they'll be a good deal troubled to come.

I know that. Yes, they've all a yellow and sly look; just for all as if they were first cousins to people that picked pockets. And that will be your case, Caudle: in six months the dear children won't know their own father.

'Well, if I know myself at all, I could have borne anything but billiards. The companions you'll find! The Captains that will be always borrowing fifty pounds of you! I tell you, Caudle, a billiard-room 's a place where ruin of all sorts is made easy, I may say, to the lowest understanding,—so you can't miss it. It 's a chapel-of-ease for the devil to preach in—don't tell me not to be eloquent: I don't know what you mean, Mr. Caudle, and I shall be just as eloquent as I like. But I never can open my lips—and it isn't often, goodness knows!—that I'm not insulted.

'No, I won't be quiet on this matter; I won't Caudle: on any other, I wouldn't say a word—and you know it—if you didn't like it; but on this matter I *will* speak. I know you can't play at billiards; and never could learn. I dare say not; but that makes it all the worse, for look at the money you'll lose; see the ruin you'll be brought to. It 's no use your telling me you'll not play—now you can't help it. And nicely you'll be eaten up. Don't talk to me; dear aunt told me all about it. The lots of fellows that go every day into billiard-rooms to get their dinners, just as a fox sneaks into a farm-yard to look about him for a fat goose—and they'll eat you up, Caudle; I know they will.

'Billiard-balls, indeed! Well, in my time I've been over Woolwich Arsenal—you were something like a man then, for it was just before we were married—and then I saw all sorts of balls; mountains of 'em, to be shot away at churches, and into people's peaceable habitations, breaking the china, and nobody knows what—I say, I've seen all these balls—well, I know I've said that before; but I choose to say it again—and there 's not one of 'em, iron as they are, that could do half the mischief of a billiard-ball. That 's a ball, Caudle, that 's gone through many a wife's heart, to say nothing of her

children. And that 's a ball, that night and day you'll be destroying your family with. Don't tell me you'll not play! When once a man 's given to it—as my poor aunt used to say—the devil 's always tempting him with a ball, as he tempted Eve with an apple.

' I shall never think of being happy any more. No; that 's quite out of the question. You'll be there every night—I know you will, better than you, so don't deny it—every night over that wicked green cloth. Green, indeed! It 's red, crimson red, Caudle, if you could only properly see it—crimson red, with the hearts those balls have broken. Don't tell me not to be pathetic—I shall: as pathetic as it suits me. I suppose I may speak. However, I've done. It 's all settled now. You're a billiard-player, and I'm a wretched woman.'

' *I did not deny either position,*' writes Caudle, ' *and for this reason—I wanted to sleep.*'

LECTURE THE LAST

MRS. CAUDLE HAS TAKEN COLD; THE TRAGEDY OF THIN SHOES

MR. CAUDLE A WIDOWER

'M not going to contradict you, Caudle; you may say what you like—but I think I ought to know my own feelings better than you. I don't wish to upbraid you neither; I'm too ill for that; but it's not getting wet in thin shoes, — oh, no! it's my mind, Caudle, my mind, that's killing me. Oh, yes! gruel, indeed—you think gruel will cure a woman of anything; and you know, too, how I hate it. Gruel can't reach what I suffer; but, of course, nobody is ever ill but yourself. Well, I—I didn't mean to say that; but when you talk in that way about thin shoes, a woman says, of course, what she doesn't mean; she can't help it. You've always gone on about my shoes; when I think I'm the fittest judge of what becomes me best. I dare say,—'twould be all the same to you if I put on ploughman's boots; but I'm

not going to make a figure of my feet, I can tell you. I've never got cold with the shoes I've worn yet, and 'tisn't likely I should begin now.

'No, Caudle; I wouldn't wish to say anything to accuse you: no, goodness knows, I wouldn't make you uncomfortable for the world,—but the cold I've got, I got ten years ago. I have never said anything about it—but it has never left me. Yes; ten years ago the day before yesterday.

'*How can I recollect it?*

'Oh, very well: women remember things you never think of: poor souls! they've good cause to do so. Ten years ago, I was sitting up for you,—there now, I'm not going to say anything to vex you, only do let me speak: ten years ago, I was waiting for you, and I fell asleep, and the fire went out, and when I woke I found I was sitting right in the draught of the key-hole. That was my death, Caudle, though don't let that make you uneasy, love; for I don't think you meant to do it.

'Ha! it 's all very well for you to call it nonsense; and to lay your ill conduct upon my shoes. That 's like a man, exactly! There never was a man yet that killed his wife, who couldn't give a good reason for it. No: I don't mean to say that you've killed me: quite the reverse: still there 's never been a day that I haven't felt that key-hole. What?

'*Why won't I have a doctor?*

'What 's the use of a doctor? Why should I put you to expense? Besides, I dare say you'll do very well without me, Caudle: yes, after a very little time you won't miss me much—no man ever does.

'Peggy tells me, Miss Prettyman called to-day.

'*What of it?*

'Nothing, of course. Yes; I know she heard I was ill, and that 's why she came. A little indecent, I think, Mr. Caudle; she might wait; I sha'n't be in her way long; she may soon have the key of the caddy, now.

'Ha! Mr. Caudle, what 's the use of your calling me your dearest soul now? Well, I do believe you. I dare say you do mean it; that is, I hope you do. Never-

theless, you can't expect I can lie quiet in this bed, and think of that young woman—not, indeed, that she 's near so young as she gives herself out. I bear no malice towards her, Caudle,—not the least. Still, I don't think I could lie at peace in my grave if—well, I won't say anything more about her ; but you know what I mean.

'I think dear mother would keep house beautifully for you when I'm gone. Well, love, I won't talk in that way if you desire it. Still, I know I've a dreadful cold ; though I won't allow it for a minute to be the shoes—certainly not. I never would wear 'em thick, and you know it, and they never gave me a cold yet. No, dearest Caudle, it 's ten years ago that I did it ; not that I'll say a syllable of the matter to hurt you. I'd die first.

'Mother, you see, knows all your little ways ; and you wouldn't get another wife to study you and pet you up as I've done—a second wife never does ; it isn't likely she should. And after all, we've been very happy. It hasn't been my fault if we've ever had a word or two, for you couldn't help now and then being aggravating ; nobody can help their tempers always,—especially men. Still we've been very happy, haven't we, Caudle ?

'Good-night. Yes,—this cold does tear me to pieces ; but for all that, it isn't the shoes. God bless you, Caudle; no,—it 's *not* the shoes. I won't say it 's the key-hole ; but again I say, it 's not the shoes. God bless you once more—But never say it 's the shoes.'

This significant sketch is a correct copy of a drawing from the hand of Caudle at the end of this Lecture. It can hardly, we think, be imagined that Mrs. Caudle, during her fatal illness, never mixed admonishment with soothing as before ; but such fragmentary Lectures were, doubtless, considered by her disconsolate

widower as having too touching, too solemn an import to be vulgarised by type. They were, however, printed on the heart of Caudle; for he never ceased to speak of the late partner of his bed as either 'his sainted creature,' or 'that angel now in heaven.'

POSTSCRIPT

Our duty of editorship is closed. We hope we have honestly fulfilled the task of selection from a large mass of papers. We could have presented to the female world a Lecture for Every Night in the year. Yes,—three hundred and sixty-five separate Lectures! We trust, however, that we have done enough. And if we have armed weak woman with even one argument in her unequal contest with that imperious creature, man—if we have awarded to a sex, as Mrs. Caudle herself was wont to declare, 'put upon from the beginning,' the slightest means of defence—if we have supplied a solitary text to meet any one of the manifold wrongs with which woman, in her household life, is continually pressed by her tyrannic taskmaster, man,—we feel that we have only paid back one grain, hardly one, of that mountain of more than gold it is our felicity to owe her.

During the progress of these Lectures, it has very often pained us, and that excessively, to hear from unthinking, inexperienced men—bachelors of course—that every woman, no matter how divinely composed, has in her ichor-flowing veins one drop—'no bigger than a wren's eye'—of Caudle; that Eve herself may now and then have been guilty of a lecture, murmuring it balmily amongst the rose-leaves. It may be so; still, be it our pride never to believe it. NEVER!

MR. CAUDLE'S BREAKFAST TALK

CHAPTER I

HOW MR. CAUDLE MARRIED MISS PRETTYMAN, AND HOW HE 'NAGGED' HER TO DEATH

When Harry Prettyman saw the very superb funeral of Mrs. Caudle,—Prettyman attended as mourner, and was particularly jolly in the coach,—he observed that the disconsolate widower showed that, above all men, he knew how to make the best of a bad bargain. The remark, as the dear deceased would have said, was unmanly, brutal, but quite like *that Prettyman.* The same scoffer, when Caudle declared 'he should never cease to weep,' replied, 'he was very sorry to hear it; for it *must* raise the price of onions.' It was not enough to help to break the heart of a wife; no, the savage must joke over its precious pieces.

The funeral, we repeat, was remarkably handsome: in Prettyman's words, nothing could be more satisfactory. Caudle spoke of a monument. Whereupon Prettyman suggested 'Death gathering a nettle.' Caudle—the act did equal honour to his brain and his bosom—rejected it.

Mr. Caudle, attended by many of his friends, returned to his widowed home in tolerable spirits. Prettyman said, jocosely poking his two fingers in Caudle's ribs, that in a week he'd look 'quite a tulip.' Caudle merely replied—he could hardly hope it.

Prettyman's mirth, however, communicated itself to the company; and in a very little time the meeting took the air of a very pleasant party. Somehow, Miss

Prettyman presided at the tea-table. There was in her manner a charming mixture of grace, dignity, and confidence—a beautiful black swan. Prettyman, by the way, whispered to a friend, that there was just this difference between Mrs. Caudle and his sister—'Mrs. Caudle was a great goose, whereas Sarah was a little duck.' We will not swear that Caudle did not overhear the words; for, as he resignedly stirred his tea, he looked at the lady at the head of the table, smiled, and sighed.

It was odd; but women are so apt! Miss Prettyman seemed as familiar with Caudle's silver tea-pot as with her own silver thimble. With a smile upon her face—like the butter on the muffins—she handed Caudle his tea-cup. Caudle would, now and then, abstractedly cast his eyes above the mantel-piece. There was Mrs. Caudle's portrait. Whereupon Miss Prettyman would say, 'You must take comfort, Mr. Caudle, indeed you must.' At length Mr. Caudle replied, 'I will, Miss Prettyman.'

What then passed through Caudle's brain we know not; but this we know: in a twelvemonth and a week from that day, Sarah Prettyman was Caudle's second wife. Mrs. Caudle, number two. Poor thing!

CHAPTER II

HOW MR. CAUDLE BEGINS TO SHOW OFF 'THE FIEND THAT 'S IN HIM'

'It is rather extraordinary, Mrs. Caudle, that we have now been married four weeks,—I don't exactly see what you have to sigh about,—and yet you can't make me a proper cup of tea. However, I don't know how I should expect it. There never was but one woman who could make tea to my taste, and she is now in Heaven. Now, Mrs. Caudle, let me hear no crying. I'm not one of the people to be melted by

the tears of a woman; for you can all cry—all of you—at a minute's notice. The water's always laid on, and down it comes if a man only holds up his finger.

'*You didn't think I could be so brutal?* That's it. Let a man only speak, and he's brutal. It's a woman's first duty to make a decent cup of tea. What do you think I married you for? It's all very well with your tambour-work and such trumpery. You can make butterflies on kettle-holders; but can you make a pudding, ma'am? I'll be bound not.

'Of course, as usual; you've given me the corner-roll, because you know I hate a corner-roll. I did think you must have seen that. I *did* hope I should not be obliged to speak on so paltry a subject—but it's no use to hope to be mild with you. I see that's hopeless.

'And what a herring! And you call it a bloater, I suppose? Ha! there *was* a woman who had an eye for a bloater, but—sainted creature!—she's here no longer. You *wish she was?* O, I understand that. I'm sure, if anybody should wish her back, it's—but she was too good for me. "When I'm gone, Caudle," she used to say, "then you'll know the wife I was to you." And now I do know it.

'Here's the eggs boiled to a stone again! Do you think, Mrs. Caudle, I'm a canary-bird, to be fed upon hard eggs? Don't tell me about the servant. A wife is answerable to her husband for her servants. It's her business to hire proper people: if she doesn't, she's not fit to be a wife. I find the money, Mrs. Caudle, and I expect you to find the cookery.

'There you are with your pocket-handkerchief again; the old flag of truce; but it doesn't trick me. A *pretty honeymoon?* Honeymoon? nonsense! People can't have two honeymoons in their lives. There *are* feelings—I find it now—that we can't have twice in our existence. There's no making honey a second time.

'No; I think I've put up with your neglect long enough: and there's nothing like beginning as we intend to go on. Therefore, Mrs. Caudle, if my tea isn't made a little more to my liking to-morrow—and

if you insult me with a herring like that—and boil my eggs that you might fire 'em out of guns—why, perhaps, Mrs. Caudle, you may see a man in a passion. It takes a good deal to rouse me, but when I am up—I say, when I am up—that's all.

'Where did I put my gloves? You *don't know?* Of course not: you know nothing.'

CHAPTER III

SHOWING HOW MR. CAUDLE COULD GO OUT AND ENJOY HIMSELF

'By the by, Sarah, just put half a dozen shirts, and all that sort of thing, in my portmanteau. I'm going—There you are with your black looks again! I can never go anywhere, just a little to enjoy myself, but you look like thunder. What! *I might sometimes take you out?* Nonsense! women—that is, women when they're married—are best at home. What can they want to go out for? It's quite enough for them to go out to hunt for husbands; when they've caught 'em, let 'em sit at home, and sing with the kettle and the cat; their best place is their fireside.

'Half a dozen shirts, I say, and my shaving tackle. Do you hear me, Mrs. Caudle? Perhaps when you've done counting the legs of that fly on the ceiling, you'll attend to me. Eh? *I think you never want to go out?* Quite the contrary; it's my belief you'd always be out. If you wanted to go about like a June fly, why did you marry?

'I should have told you where I was going; but as you've shown your temper, I won't tell you a syllable. No; nor I shan't tell you whom I am going with, or when I shall be back. When you see me, then you may expect me; and not before. And mind all the buttons are on my shirts—that's all.

'*It's miserable always being left by yourself!* Yourself, indeed! Arn't there books in the house? There's

capital company on the shelves if you'd only get acquainted with them. I'm sure you'd be none the worse for 'em. Besides, there's the cookery book: read that. A wife can't study anything better.

'The fact is, Mrs. Caudle, I've indulged you too much. I've made a fool of you. *No, I haven't?* Well, then, who has? If I haven't, somebody has, it's plain. Going out, indeed! I've no opinion of any woman who wants to go out at all. Women were never intended to go out; only the fact is, we've let you have your own way. Ha! they manage these matters much better in the East.

'I'm generally a pretty quiet man, Mrs. Caudle, and you know it. Nevertheless, I have a little of the lion in me; just a little. Don't rouse it, that's all.

'There you are, with the pocket-handkerchief again. Always hoisting that signal of distress. No, no; I'm not made of sugar, like a twelfth-cake image; I'm not to be melted with tears: let them be as many and as hot as they will. Besides, as I say, you can all do it when you like—every mother's soul of you. But I'm not to be washed off my legs by any river of the sort.

'All I say to you is, stay at home. You've a needle and thread, haven't you? and I'll be sworn for it, plenty of things to make or to mend. And if you haven't, cut holes, and sew 'em up again.

'Now, see when I come home that my portmanteau's ready. What's o'clock? You *want five minutes to ——?* No doubt: the old story; you're always wanting something.'

CHAPTER IV

SHOWING HOW CAUDLE, HAVING LOST MONEY AT CARDS, DETERMINES TO ABRIDGE THE HOUSE EXPENSES

'I DON'T know how it is, my dear; but when I remember there's only you and myself—just two of us,

and I eat and drink next to nothing—and when I see what other people do with half our money, I do think you might be a little more careful. I'm sure I spend no money on myself—none. Nobody can be more watchful of every sixpence; but, of course, a man can save but little when he knows, or, that is, when he fears he knows, that everything's going to waste at home. Besides, it's a woman's place—particularly a woman's place—to save. Women were designed for it. Economy is one of the noblest virtues bound up with matrimony. There can be very little real love, Mrs. Caudle, where economy's neglected. A woman can't truly care for a man's heart, unless she has an equal regard for his pocket: the things go together, and always did from the first.

'No, Mrs. Caudle, I did not lose at my whist club last night, that is, only next to nothing; in other words, nothing to speak of. Now, that's like your sex. You always set about hunting for some foolish, shabby motive for whatever your husbands complain about. Because I lose at cards, I *don't* want to get the money back out of your cupboard. No: I want to save money, that, should I be taken from you—and life at all times is uncertain, Mrs. Caudle—you might be left snug and comfortable—that's my object. But I never knew any woman yet—except one, rest her sainted soul!—who had the mind or the generosity to allow a truly noble motive to what her husband should do, that is, if it went against herself. You can't help it, poor things!—nevertheless, when a man is depriving himself of every little enjoyment that he may lay by something for a rainy day, it *is* hard—a little hard, I think—to have a woman spend what you do in housekeeping.

'Now, Mrs. Caudle, be rational; and, for the thousandth time, let me beg of you not to cry. You only waste your trouble and your tears. Both are thrown away upon me. I'm not one of the people, I tell you again, to be melted with a little soft water. My expenses, that is, *your* expenses, are dreadful. Your

grocer's bill—and when I never taste sugar in my tea—is preposterous; enough to ruin a man of ten thousand a year. What? *I take sugar in my grog, and so do my friends.* Scarcely any—nothing to speak of; not worth naming.

'And then look at your butcher for the last fortnight. Well? I know I won't eat cold joints. I had enough of them with my first—that is, I can't bear 'em. Besides, with half the money you have, a cold joint is an insult to any man.

'And finally, Mrs. Caudle,—for you know I hate this talk at breakfast; it 's a meal of all others I like to enjoy when I can,—finally, I have made a calculation, and in the next month, come what will, your cupboard must do with ten pounds less. It 's for your good, I tell you, when I'm gone, and ten pounds I must have of you.'

CHAPTER V

SHOWING HOW CAUDLE CAME HOME VERY LATE, AND VERY VINOUS: HE COMPLAINS OF WANT OF SYMPATHY

'THE old story, Mrs. Caudle! Sulky again! But so it is with women of no intellect; they can never properly sympathize with a man. You make the tea as if you were making poison, and all because I kept you up just a little last night. Ha! I only wish you had half what I have upon my mind. What! *You wouldn't have half what I had in my head?* Indeed I know what you mean; but I only wish you had. You'd have a little more sympathy for what I have to go through; as I say, you don't know what 's in my mind. Women, who have to sit quietly basking before the fire all day, doing nothing whatever, except, perhaps, a little sewing—women, in their snug homes, know nothing of what their husbands have to go through in the world; slaving and wearing, as I may say, their very souls out. Ha! I only wish I'd been

a woman. O, you needn't sigh, Mrs. Caudle; you've all the best of it from the beginning.

'For how can you tell, when your husband is doing all he can to seem happy and delighted at home. What! *You never saw him in such a state!* You might, if you'd eyes like any other woman. I say, how can you tell at the very time he's full—running over, I may say, with smiles, and affability, and good temper—how can you tell that his brain isn't being torn into bits, and all to make his wife happy and comfortable at her own fireside? I must say it; I only wish you'd my anxieties, sometimes; just for half a day, that's all; you'd have more sympathy, Mrs. Caudle; a little more sympathy. There you go on again,—with your woman's argument. *If I have so much on my mind, I needn't stay out so late!* How can you possibly tell what it is that detains me? If I chose, like some men, to tell my wife everything, and so worry you and make you unhappy with all sorts of anxieties,—then, indeed, I dare say I might have a little more tenderness from you. *But*, precisely because I wish to keep you in clover—precisely because I won't let you be worried by worldly matters—you think I've nothing to contend with. Ha! Mrs. Caudle—I can't help saying it—if you only knew what was on my mind!

'What do you know what wine *will* do, or won't do? Besides, I'd taken but a poor half pint of the very weakest sherry last night! Only half a pint. But when I'm harassed you ought to know how a little tells upon me. I was not intoxicated, Mrs. Caudle; I was merely intensely anxious. And if you'd any sympathy you'd known it. Yes, a woman with sympathy would have felt for me; would have turned a face upon me beaming with love and comfort—and not have been all night making up looks of thunder to come to breakfast with.

'I'm going out, now, and I shall take the key; so don't sit up again. I promised to sup at Doubleday's to-night; and you don't know what's on my mind.'

CHAPTER VI

SHOWING HOW CAUDLE BROUGHT HOME SOME 'GOOD FELLOWS' TO SPEND THE EVENING, AND FOUND MRS. CAUDLE WITH SOME FEMALE FRIENDS AT TEA

'I DIDN'T choose to say anything to you last night, Mrs. Caudle—no: you needn't tell me that; I know I didn't open my lips; don't I say so, woman?—I didn't speak, because, indeed, I was too tired. But I *do* think it hard that I can't leave the house for a few days but I must find it swarming with petticoats when I come back. Your friends, as you call 'em! as if women could ever be friends! It 's rather hard, with what I'm charged for housekeeping, that I must find the place like a fair. *You didn't expect me home till to-morrow?* O, no! Else I should have found you alone, and as mute as a mouse; and not a word would you have said to me about the pack of gossips you'd had about you!

'Now, Mrs. Caudle, for the future just remember one thing. Never think to expect me; for you shall never know the exact time when I shall come home. No: I shall always take you by surprise; as every man who'd know what his wife's about should do.

'Well, I think I may guess now where the housekeeping money goes to! Now I can account for the grocer's bills—and I can't tell what other bills besides—when I see the people you have to eat me up. And then when I bring home a few friends that I find aboard the steamboat—good fellows, I know, every one of 'em; though I never saw them before—when I come home, I find my house full of silks and satins—a mountain of bonnets on my bed—and nothing fit for Christians to sit down to. And after such conduct you'll expect me to keep my temper! Yes: you'll open your eyes and affect to stare at me, if I only swear the smallest in the world—when if you'd married some men, Mrs. Caudle, the house wouldn't

have held you! Now, I should like to know what my friends thought of me last night—what they thought of you? Why, of course they looked upon me as a fool for putting up with your conduct as quietly as I did; whilst for you, but—I'll respect your feelings—I won't say what they must have thought of you.

'For an hour and a half, at least, did we wait for supper—if supper, indeed, you could call it; for I blushed at everything upon the table. An hour and a half. *There was nothing in the house; everything was to be got?* Why, that's what I complain of, woman. That's the very fault. I bring home a few friends to supper, and there's nothing in the house. But I come home, and I find you with I don't know what cotton-box acquaintances, and the house smelling of toast and tea-cake enough to ruin one.

'Now, Mrs. Caudle, if we wish to continue happy together, understand that I won't have it. If I can't give a little supper to friends at my own home, I'd better give up housekeeping altogether.

'Where 's my hat and gloves? I dine out to-day.'

CHAPTER VII

SHOWING HOW CAUDLE BROUGHT HOME A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG, INSISTING THAT 'THE POOR ANIMAL CAN'T ADD TO THE EXPENSE'

'O, NO! I know what the objection is, Mrs. Caudle. It isn't that the poor faithful animal will add to the butcher's bill—not a bit of it. No: it is only because the creature is fond of me, that you object to it. 'Tis only because of its love for its master—and it 's well I can get somebody about the house that does love me—that you make an excuse of the expense. You can keep your canary-bird—that 's rattling away all day like a whistle in hysterics—and I never complain

of the expense of that. You can keep your half a dozen gold-fish too, and do I ever murmur at what they cost? I think not. And yet when I bring home a dog—a fine fellow as high as the table—instead of admiring the noble animal as any other wife would do, you begin to talk about what it will eat! But that's like you, Mrs. Caudle; that's the rock we've always split upon. You never had any sympathy—not an atom. True marriage ought to melt two hearts into one piece. Ours—I am sorry to say it—have only been tacked together. There *was*, indeed, a woman—but, sainted darling!—why should I name her?

'I repeat it; if you thought of me as you ought, you'd be delighted with the animal. A true wife would love even a crocodile or a boa-constrictor, if her husband brought it home. But my wife's like no other woman—never was. *You don't object to the dog if I chain it up?* I think, Mrs. Caudle, you ought to know my principles a little better by this time. No, madam; liberty—though it's quite above the female intellect to understand its beautiful essence—but liberty I wouldn't deny even to a dog. The poor beast shall have the run of the house all day, and—noble fellow—sleep at my bed-room door all night. I'll have somebody near me that loves me—I'm determined!

'What are you whimpering about? *The beast will kill your cat?* Perhaps he may; and what if he does? Cats are plenty enough, I suppose. I'm sure there's more in my house than catch mice; I know that. Not that I see the noble fellow need kill her unless you choose. *What do I mean?* Mean! Why, lock her up in the cellar, or cupboard, or coal-hole. He won't kill her, if he can't get at her. I'll answer for him. Eh? *And yet I talk of liberty?* To be sure I do. But there's your great defect again, Mrs. Caudle; you've no sympathy—none, or you'd know what I mean directly. Liberty for dogs is one thing; liberty for cats is another. There's what I call a moral distinction entirely.'

CHAPTER VIII

SHOWING HOW CAUDLE THOUGHT 'THAT BILL' SETTLED A LONG TIME AGO

'If, now, I were to leave you, Mrs. Caudle,—if I were to do what I really ought to do as a husband,—break up the establishment and go myself into chambers, just giving you enough to live upon—of course the world—the world that never can judge between man and wife, but always will poke its nose in between 'em whenever they separate—the world, I've no doubt, would begin to abuse me. *What's the matter?* Matter enough, I think! I'm called out, from my breakfast too, and this, Mrs. Caudle, this little bit of paper, put into my hand. What, have you the face to ask, Mrs. Caudle? *What of it? Don't I know I owe it?* Why, of course not! I could have laid my life that *that* bill was paid long ago! I could have sworn it! *How was it to be paid?* You ask that! Why, with money, of course. *But I never gave you the money?* Nonsense! You're enough to drive a man mad, Mrs. Caudle. I must have given you the money; of course I must. Else where can all the money go to? *When did I give it?* Well, if you are not the most outrageous, perplexing woman! When did I give it, indeed! As if, with what I have on my mind, I can exactly recollect the day, and the hour, and the place when I gave you the money for that bill! I, who am always giving you money for bills. Do you think I'm a calculating machine, Mrs. Caudle,—to remember everything, and with what I have in my head? All I know is—and that's enough for any reasonable man—all I know is, I must have given you the money. The bill's been delivered a month ago, the man told me; and you're not the woman I know, to let me remain quiet for a bill so long. No, indeed; for if there's anything in the world gives you pleasure, it is con-

tinually coming to my pocket. And you must think I've a gold mine there; to dip as you do into it.

'There you are! crying again! That's the mean advantage you women always try to take of your husbands. What! *You wish I'd common feelings, and you wish you were in your grave?* Of course. A man can't open his mouth, can't make the slightest remonstrance, when a woman lets money matters go all wrong, but he wants feelings. Ha! He'd better want a few feelings than want money. And I'm sure, Mrs. Caudle, that's your opinion, if you spoke the truth. And then again, you must always be scratching your grave up before me! And only because I just spoke about a bill. Of course, you've paid away the money for something else—some new gowns, perhaps—and forgot it.

'However, Mrs. Caudle, it is not worth quarrelling about—certainly not. Besides, I hate quarrelling. However, this I have to say: as I'm convinced that I've given you the money for the bill, I'm not going to pay it a second time. You must save it out of something else. *What are you to save it out of?* Anything: cat's meat and canary-seed!—but I don't pay twice.'

CHAPTER IX

SHOWING HOW MR. CAUDLE OBJECTED TO MRS. CAUDLE'S FEMALE FRIEND, A VISITOR FOR A MONTH

'WHEN a husband comes home to what he expects to find a comfortable house, it is a little—I say a *little* annoying for him—to break his shins over a heap of portmanteaus in the hall, and find, too, he's saddled with a visitor,—some stupid Miss or the other, with all her boarding-school starch about her. Eh—what? *You told me you'd invited dear Miss Loveday?* You took an advantage of me, then, and told me when I was asleep. I don't recollect it. And now I shall

be stunned to death by her for three months—for of course she plays the piano; and I shouldn't wonder if she 's brought a guitar besides with her. For three precious months! What! *She's only invited for one month?* Humph! Then she'll stay three, of course: they always do.

'Nice breakfasts I shall have now—for she'll not always stay in her own room; she won't always be tired travelling. Nice breakfasts I'm doomed to! What! *How will the dear soul hurt me?* O, in the gentlest way possible—I know. She'll always be reading the play-house advertisements in the paper, and always be wanting to go to the opera, or concert, or fireworks, or some show of that sort. I know the sideway talk of such girls very well. But understand, Mrs. Caudle, I'm not hampered with her. As you say she was your school-fellow once—I suppose I shall have all Minerva House here in their turn—you alone must be troubled with her. I shall behave as civil as I can—but don't expect that I'll take her out, or spend money upon her; that 's your affair, not mine.

'No, I *don't* forget when I'd my three friends here all together: not at all; I was too happy ever to forget it. Jack Stokes—noble fellow! What a song he sang, and what punch he made: Tom Ryder—the best fellow he at whist and a chorus: and Sam Slab, who gave such a licking to the coal-heaver. Ha! they were something like people to have in one's house. What! *You never complained of them, and why can't you have a friend?* That 's quite a different thing. Besides, as I say, women never have friendship one among another—they don't know what it means. No, indeed; I *don't* think friendship 's a thing of cigars and brandy and water—not but what all these are a very pretty mixture. They were something like nights we had. *You never got to sleep till four while my friends were here?* What 's that to do with it? Is that any reason you should bring a lot of visitors to my house who can't say 'bo' to a goose? And when you know,

too, how I like to enjoy the comfort of my friends alone! How I hate that we should have anybody to disturb us! And if you loved me really, you'd hate it too—but it's a bad business to have all the love on one side: I feel *that*.'

CHAPTER X

SHOWING MR. CAUDLE AGAIN PERPLEXED WITH DOMESTIC FINANCE

'Is it not a most extraordinary thing, that I can't sit down to enjoy a bit of breakfast, but under my nose there's a paper for taxes? *It's just been left, and it's Sarah's fault?* No!—it's your fault, Mrs. Caudle: you know that such things at such a time always affect my appetite, and it's my belief that you have 'em put there to save your cupboard. Taxes—taxes! What! *You don't pay 'em?* No: but what's quite as bad, you are always plaguing me about them. I can't help saying it, Mrs. Caudle, but what a much nicer wife you'd be, if there was no money!

'But I know it: when a woman likes to be extravagant, let a man do what he will, he's no match for her. I see that every day. Only yesterday I saw an old coat of mine—a very good coat too—on old Digges. Ha! my dear first wife used to turn my left-off clothes into beautiful rugs. But then, to be sure, she had some respect for my exertions. She used to calculate how and where the money came from. But—I must say it—I've no confidence in what's spent here.

'No, indeed, Mrs. Caudle. I'm not a cruel, unjust man—nor have I anything of the tyrant about me,—not a bit. But when women happen to be a little younger than their husbands—and that—I knew it, to be sure—was your fault when I married you—they are apt to indulge in expenses; and—I must

say it—that last hosier's bill that came in I don't at all understand. I'm sure by the socks that's down for me, anybody would think I was a centipede. Well, I can't help sometimes suspecting—I should be glad if I could be disabused—but I can't help thinking, now and then, that what I've paid for hosiery you've worn in velvet and silk.

'If I could only be sure of this, I should know very well how to act. *Then* my course would be plain enough. What? *If I'm not sure, why do I accuse you?* O, there can be nothing lost by that. For if a woman is blamed when she doesn't deserve it, she's sure some time or other to escape when she does; so there's nothing thrown away, blame her when you will.'

With this liberal axiom Caudle took his hat, observing to his weeping wife that he 'might be home to dinner, and he might not.'

CHAPTER XI

SHOWING HOW MR. CAUDLE THOUGHT SOMETHING 'VERY ODD'

'ANYTHING particular, my dear, in the paper—I mean anything in the military way? *What do I mean?* O, nothing. Ha, ha! A little joke of mine—just a little joke. What do you think of the cavalry regiment? *What am I driving at?* Nothing at all. I thought you might have seen 'em. They go by the window, you know, twice a day. *What of it?* Nothing to be sure. Only it is odd—I must say it is odd, that one of 'em—a young fellow with sandy mustachios—always turns his head towards this house. I say it 's odd—slightly odd. Now, you can't say he 's looking for Miss Loveday. She's gone—thank Heaven! at last. I waited till she went before I spoke; because I know how women will stand by one another.

'Well, Miss Loveday is gone—do you hear me, Mrs. Caudle?—and still that fellow with the sandy mustachios looks towards this house. Now, I think that's something very odd. And I should like to know what he's looking for? What! *I'd better ask him?* I shall take my own opinion as to that, Mrs. Caudle; but allow me to say this much—that—ha! there *was* a woman—who never, never caused me the finger ache. That I had never lost that woman! Eh? *You wish I never had?* Ha! *She* never gave herself airs about her beauty. What! *She couldn't?* Mrs. Caudle, I don't wish to say a harsh thing of you—far from it. But permit me, in all good temper, to say, that you are not fit to stir the tea of that blessed woman. She never looked about her—never stared at anybody but her own husband when she went out. She never thought there was another such in the world. But I deserved to lose her—I didn't think enough of her then.

'If any soldier had dared to look twice at any house she was in, she'd have shown what she felt as a wife, and closed every shutter. But she *did* know her duty—I wish other people did.'

Upon this, the second Mrs. Caudle—poor ill-used soul!—simply remarked that 'she knew he was a brute,' and left him with his own bad thoughts, and his own bohea.

CHAPTER XII

MR. CAUDLE'S DEFENCE OF HIS TYRANNY

Mr. Caudle, ere he left this world, had much more 'Breakfast Talk' with his unfortunate wife; but it is believed that we have given the principal heads of his discourses; for his topics were like the church bells—they 'nearly always rang the same morning peal.' To the reader who believed in the declaration of the first Mrs. Caudle that her husband 'was really

an aggravating man,' with her prophecy that 'the world would at last know him as well as she did,' the conduct of this individual towards the insnared and unfortunate Miss Prettyman, may not afford surprise. Caudle himself, however, set up an ingenious if not a credible defence. Prettyman, his brother-in-law, had now and then remonstrated with him. 'I don't mean it,—upon my life, I mean nothing. I'm very fond of your sister—extremely fond; it 's only a habit, my ill-treatment—nothing but a habit.'

'A habit!' cried Prettyman; 'why, that 's what we complain of! That 's what we want you to get rid of.'

'Impossible, my dear boy—quite impossible. Having lived twenty years with the late Mrs. Caudle, though I believed her to be a sainted woman notwithstanding—how was it to be expected that I shouldn't make a natural use of my liberty? You don't suppose I was going to suffer Mrs. Caudle the second to be only another Mrs. Caudle the first—so, you see, I bent the bar the other way.'

'And this is your defence,' cried Prettyman.

'My excellent friend,' said Caudle, 'bad temper 's catching. Therefore, let folks beware how they come together. If I've been a little bit of a tyrant in my second marriage, 'tis only because I was a slave in the first; and all tyrants, my dear boy, are only slaves turned inside out.'

'I can make nothing of that figure,' said Prettyman, 'but this: that in most marriages there are faults on both sides.'

'Exactly so,' answered Caudle, 'and both I've known.'

STORIES AND ESSAYS

PATTY LARKSPUR'S WATCH

'I BEG your pardon, madam; but you are a little too fast.'

'I think, sir, you are a little too slow.'

'No, madam—no, indeed.'

'Are you sure you are right, sir?'

'As the sun, madam—as the sun.'

'Well, I confess it—I am one of the giddiest things at a watch!'

'Will you, madam, permit me to regulate your chronometer by mine?'

'Oh, sir, with pleasure—with many thanks.'

'Diamonds, doubtless?'

'They ought to be.'

There appears but little in the above courteous interchange of words; and yet, as we hope to make the reader confess, they were the prologue to a most important drama. 'Will you, madam, permit me to regulate your chronometer by mine?' That so polite, so urbane an offer, should ever meet with such ill reward!

Henry Snow was a placid bachelor of two-and-forty. The whole world was to him one green spot, in which comforts grew as thick as daisies. Cupid had very often aimed at him, but never shot. 'I hate that Mr. Snow—he's so polite!' was the hasty expression of a young lady in the five-and-twentieth year of Mr. Snow's life—Henry at the time having affability for a bevy of thirty women; and, a justice that is sometimes very annoying, scrupulously sharing his politeness among all. Not one young lady gained half a look, an approach to a smile, more than another.

Now, there is an implied invulnerability in such conduct, very galling to the enemy. But so it was with Henry Snow: he would hand his heart, so to speak, in slices, to a large circle, and with the same agreeable equanimity that an undertaker walks round with funeral cake. However, Achilles had his heel; and Henry Snow met Patty Larkspur.

To a contemplative mind, autumn brings a sweet and bitter melancholy. The leaves, 'thin dancers upon air,' do *not* take our thoughts to Taglioni; and the wind, moaning, sobbing through the branches, does not always carry us to the last new opera. It is highly necessary that the reader should pay due attention to this, our profound reflection, inasmuch as he will thus the more deeply sympathize with our hero, believing the very season to have taken part with Patty Larkspur against him. Not that we are disposed to undervalue the single power of the lady; we think it more than probable, from the knowledge of her great spirit of enterprise, that, at any quarter of the year, Henry Snow must have fallen; still, had it been spring instead of autumn, we are inclined to think he would have made a longer fight of it. We have said that, to all men of any degree of sensibility, autumn brings its gentle sadness; but in a bachelor of two-and-forty there arises a peculiar train of reflection; he begins to doubt the efficacy of a warming-pan contrasted with other means of effecting the same result; his housekeeper begins to merge her deference to the master in friendship to the man; there are twenty delicate household appeals, too delicate to be shaped into language. In a word, it was the beginning of autumn when Henry Snow, bachelor, sat, in the Hastings coach, opposite to Patty Larkspur, spinster. That the ruin of the man should be complete, there was no other passenger, save a large brown pointer, the favoured property of the lady. Poor Henry Snow!

The reader has doubtless pondered on the heroic feats of some happy child of Mars; has seen him—his white plume conspicuous in the *mêlée*—with a hundred

Damascus blades playing like sunbeams about his unhurt head; has seen a whole troop discharge their carbines at him, to the waste of powder and shot, the hero still unwounded. Covered with laurels, he returns to his home; he is deemed by all men unconquerable, invulnerable—nothing can withstand him, nothing can hurt him. Alas! for the end! The unscathed victor, with no thought of war and death, in an evil hour carelessly takes an old rusty pistol from the shelf, loaded and overlooked for twenty years. The flint is worn, the trigger stiff, and the powder damp; and yet the conqueror, by an unlucky motion of the finger, fires the pistol, and its contents meet again in his heart. Unfortunate Henry!—we mean, unhappy conqueror!

We began our mournful narrative with a short dialogue. The coach was running towards Hastings, the horses, like the steeds of Neptune, snuffing the sea, when Patty Larkspur, looking at her watch, pronounced it to be six o'clock.

'I beg your pardon, madam,' said Henry Snow, 'but you are a little too fast.'

And then ensued the conversation which we have already faithfully registered, and which, for the sake of middle-aged bachelors—for it is in the middle state of bachelorship that the animal is in the greatest peril from his pursuers—we would we could cut in leaves of brass.

We have given the words; but we have yet to describe—if, indeed, we can—the action with which Patty Larkspur took the watch from her side, and placed it in the open palm of Henry Snow. And first, a few words on the person of the fair. We can find no other word, and yet we are loath to call any lady plump; it is a word fitter for pullets than for virgins. However, in the poverty of our language—for we care not to be beholden to France for a phrase—we must call Patty Larkspur plump—nay, she was very plump. The truth is—and we have hugged it so close that we have nearly stifled it—the truth is, Patty Larkspur was fat. She had large blue eyes, which, when show-

ing themselves to the best advantage, looked, as one of her lovers once informed her, like violets blown upon! She had a very fresh colour—very fresh! her red morocco Prayer-book was not redder. Her hair hung over her forehead and down her cheeks like twenty corkscrews turned into flax. Her little comfortable nose was of the shape and size of that diminutive specimen of the mushroom which market women call the button. Such was the face of Patty Larkspur; but it was a face highly varnished up with smiles. Nevertheless, beneath those smiles—difficult as it was for the sagacity of a man to go so far—there was a terrible energy in the woman. But smiles—smiles were her weapons; a story of her girlhood cast the shadow of the coming woman.

Patty Larkspur and Matilda Larkspur were the daughters of a small grocer at Uxbridge; now, grocers are the especial victims of Beelzebub, known in learned writ as the god of flies. It was the pleasing duty of the two sisters to waylay, knock down, or in any manner destroy the flies lured by the sweets of their paternal home. A trifling reward repaid the best destroyer. Matilda caught her victims in stale small beer; but Patty always carried off the prize, for she made war with melted sugar. Matilda died an old maid; for she ignorantly thought that the hearts of men were to be cut through, as Hannibal made way through the Alps, with vinegar: whilst Patty Larkspur—but let us not anticipate her interesting story.

'Will you, madam, permit me to regulate your chronometer by mine?' asked Henry Snow, in the fulness of his innocence.

'Oh, sir, with pleasure,—with many thanks,' said Patty Larkspur; and, taking her watch from her side, she gave it to Snow, as if she were making a present of that best estate in the world's paradise, the female heart.

Could she have truly and absolutely conveyed away that precious immovable, she could not have smiled with deeper meaning. Such was the outward mani-

festation of Patty Larkspur; but—shall we say it?—as she gave the watch to the mature bachelor, shall we confess, that on the retina of Patty Larkspur's mind was painted, not a spare biped of two-and-forty, but that some association of ideas carried her back to the days of her youth—to the home of her father at Uxbridge; and that she saw in Henry Snow—such tricks does errant fancy play the most innocent—a large blue fly approaching the fatal sugar? As he touched the regulator, she saw him close to the luscious perdition; and when he had performed his task, and looking in her face held out the watch—the fly had tumbled in and was lost for ever! Again Patty Larkspur smiled, as she saw her victim vainly struggling in an ocean of sweets.

We have no doubt that, on the part of Patty Larkspur, it was love at first sight; an accident that, however finely handled, has never, in our uneducated opinion, been properly described. It is, however, very difficult to note the many freaks committed by people in that most interesting situation. We have read much upon the subject, and are almost convinced from certain eloquent passages that love, taken suddenly, operates like laughing gas; making men, according, we presume, to their nervous system, run at whatever may be before them; grin from ear to ear; knock their heads upon the mute earth; receive love's arrow as a juggler swallows a sword, wriggling most affectingly as the weapon enters him; run round and round, like a dog in the laudable pursuit of his own tail; shout, scream, cry 'boh!' sneeze, or, indeed, commit any extravagance made pathetic by the occasion. Why is history silent on the interesting topic? When Petrarch first met Laura in the Church of Santa Clara at Avignon, on the sixth of April, in the sixth hour of the morning (and yet people preach the benefit of early rising), in the year thirteen hundred and forty-eight—is it not a fact, hitherto most shamefully hushed up, that so much was he removed from earth by the glorious vision, that he stood upon one leg for three days afterwards?

We are proud of a friendship with a traveller who has seen a portrait of the divine sonneteer, taken when undergoing love at first sight. When Henry VIII first beheld Anne Boleyn, what was his kingly conduct? Historians have deemed the matter of no account; yet, did he not, passing over every form of decency, insist on playing at leap-frog with Cardinal Wolsey, the Pope being unfortunately at Rome? There is nothing of this in Hume; but if the speculations of the most approved writers on love at first sight have any truth in nature, sure we are that Henry VIII did not marry Anne Boleyn without first jumping over the head of the 'King-Cardinal.' Did not Socrates, having for the first time beheld Xantippe, close his eyes until he took her for wife; when—and such phenomena have, we believe, occurred more than once—they became straightway open? When the venerable Greek judges acquitted, by the power of love at first sight, the incomparable Phryne, did they not, in the most forcible manner, display the unanimity of their opinions by vehemently smacking their lips. However, we shall defer for the task of our ripe old age, 'The Effects of Love at First Sight; with Instances drawn from the earliest times, and improving on Fox's "Book of Martyrs," with Portraits of the Victims.'

For the present we must attend to Henry Snow and Patty Larkspur, just alighted at the inn at Hastings.

It was half-past nine o'clock when our travellers entered their hotel. Patty Larkspur, with a low curtsey and one of her slaying smiles, wished Snow good evening, with the additional comfort of a night's sound rest after his journey; and was shown to her room. Snow took possession of his apartment, and ate his supper in all the solitude of celibacy. However, his loneliness seemed to sit as easily upon him as his dressing-gown; and at eleven o'clock, being nearly a whole fowl, a pint of wine, and a glass of brandy-and-water the better man, he had serious thoughts of going to bed. To be brief, it wanted twenty minutes to twelve when Henry Snow stretched himself between

the sheets, and rendered himself up to sleep. Morpheus was slowly descending upon him, when he was startled by a sharp knocking at the door. Snow sat up in the bed, and did precisely what nineteen men out of twenty would have done in his situation, he asked, 'Who's there?' Could he have divined the consequences of that question, we doubt not he would have rolled his ears up in the blankets, and have exhibited no sign of waking 'with that knocking.' Poor short-sighted man! blind to fate, Henry Snow sat up in his bed, and with a loud voice, repeated—

'Who's there?'

'The lady—the lady, who came down with you,' answered a voice outside.

'I'm—I'm in bed,' said Henry Snow, expecting the intelligence to frighten the visitor, like a partridge, from the door. The knock was repeated. 'I'm in bed,' again said Henry Snow, in a tone that should have successfully appealed to the compassion of the disturber. Another knock. A slight blush overspread the face of Henry Snow at the pertinacity of his visitor, and then his rising fears were somewhat soothed by the recollection that the door had a bolt and a lock, of the protecting influence of which he had happily availed himself. Snow pulled off his nightcap, and, in the perplexity of the moment, scratched his head. Another knock, applied with new emphasis, brought Snow out of bed upon the carpet. He approached the door, and putting his mouth to the key-hole, said, quite unconscious of the falsehood he uttered—

'I tell you, ma'am, I'm in bed.'

'So I thought; but, sir, if you'll only open the door.'

'Good Heavens!' thought Snow, and his knees smote one another. 'But I—I have no light,' said Snow.

'I have brought one,' was the reply.

Henry Snow rose, turned round, and fell against the door in silent horror. 'There was no escape—how to give the alarm?' was his thought. 'Was there a rattle in the room?'

'I will not detain you a minute, sir,' said the voice outside.

'But,' and Snow felt the blood under his very nails tingle as he put the question, 'but what do you want?'

'I am sent by the lady——'

'Sent!' exclaimed Snow, relieved from a mountain of dread. 'Sent! and who *are* you?'

'The waiter, sir;' and almost as the man spoke the words, the lock flew back and the bolt was drawn. Thomas, with a lighted candle in one hand and Patty Larkspur's watch in the other, advanced into the middle of the room; Henry Snow shaking in his shirt with cold and apprehension.

'What *do* you want?' asked Snow, we confess, a little pettishly.

The waiter smirked, and careless of the condition of Snow, slowly delivered himself as follows, the face of the disturbed man lengthening with the communication of Thomas—'The lady, sir, she's in forty-one.'

'At least,' said Henry Snow; for he could not repress the malice of the insinuation.

'The lady, sir—she's in forty-one—was about to go to bed, when she rang her bell, and desired the chambermaid to ask me to request you, as she wished to be very particular in the time to-morrow morning;—to request you, sir, to have the kindness to regulate her watch by yours.'

Saying which, the man held out the chronometer of Patty Larkspur to the stony fingers of Henry Snow; who now with glazed eyes looked at the face of the watch, and now at the face of the waiter.

'Oh!' at last sighed Henry Snow, and he took the watch as he would have taken a serpent by the tail, and moved towards the bed for his own repeater, followed by Thomas with the lighted candle. The door had remained open, and, unfortunately, a gust of air rushing up the staircase extinguished the light at the very moment Snow had laid his hand upon his own watch-pocket.

'Get another light, directly, sir,' said the placid waiter, doubtless inured to such accidents; for he remarked that the house was an old house, the staircases were very wide, and the wind would blow. After which he quitted the room to re-light the taper.

The wind cut across the legs of Henry Snow as he stood, with Patty Larkspur's watch in his hand, ticking away with perfect indifference. Oh! Henry Snow! had thy better genius been at thine ear, it would thus have whispered thee—'Thou hast thy mortal enemy in thy hand, a living demon shut up in gilt metal; dash it to the earth, or feel thy way to the window, and fling it into the street.' But Snow's good genius, being particularly wanted, was of course absent; and the undone man still stood, growing colder and colder, the watch, as he thought, ticking louder and louder. At length Thomas returned with a light, and Snow compared Patty Larkspur's watch—and we must own that it was a most capricious question of the time—with his own; corrected it, and, tamed by the cold, returned it to the waiter without a syllable. Thomas bowed, and left the room; Snow locked and bolted the door, and, shuddering, returned to bed. His feet were quite gone, and his legs were clay. However, he was once more becoming human flesh, was again falling into the sweetest slumber; yes, another minute, and he would have been fast in the lap of sleep, when another knock at his chamber-door struck him wide awake.

'Who's there?' asked Henry Snow, in an angry tone.

'Thomas, sir,' said the waiter, without.

'Well?' asked Snow, helplessly. 'Well?'

'If you please, sir, Miss Larkspur has desired me to ask if her watch wanted regulating, or if it was quite right?'

Now, Snow, as we have before remarked, was one of the most polite men on earth to the fair; but there did seem to him a want of consideration on the part of Miss Larkspur, in the untimeliness of her message,

and, a little piqued, he resolved to give no answer. For one minute Henry Snow was silent, when Thomas, with renewed vigour, knocked at the door.

'Was it right, sir?' bawled the invincible waiter.

'No!' exclaimed Snow; and he flung himself round in the bed, determined not to hear another syllable, and resolved that very moment to plunge into the profoundest sleep.

Thomas retired; and Snow buried his head in the pillow, doggedly fixed upon oblivion. He had advanced so far in his purpose as to close his eyes, and had nearly begun to hope for slumber, when—another knock at the door! Henry started up on his right elbow, and gasped—then he again flung himself desperately upon the bed, swathed himself like a mummy in the clothes, and resolved to lie as a man deprived of his hearing. Another knock, and Snow felt stronger in his purpose—another, and a louder knock, and Snow tried to persuade himself that he was fast asleep—another knock, and he leapt up in his bed, and brayed forth—

'Who 's there?'

'Thomas, sir,' said the waiter, as before.

'Well?' groaned Henry Snow, 'what can you want now?'

'Miss Larkspur, sir, has sent me about her watch. You said, sir, it wasn't right; now, sir, she sends her compliments, and wishes to be informed if she 's too fast or too slow?'

The waiter delivered his message glibly enough; but Henry Snow, astonished by the pertinancy of the spinster, sat upright in bed, deprived of speech. Who could answer such a woman? Thomas, however, was true to his trust, and having, as he thought, given Snow full time to satisfy the query, knocked again, and again asked—

'Sir, is Miss Larkspur too fast or two slow?'

'Too fast!' cried Henry Snow, and fell back upon his bed, incapable of another word.

Thomas quitted the door, and left Snow to sleep. The mercy, however, came too late. The poor bachelor

lay listening to the ticking of his own watch, and thinking that it ticked very like the watch of Miss Larkspur, until the grey dawn glimmered through his window curtains. He then fell into a sleep only to be haunted by terrible visions. He dreamt, among other things, that he was married to a witch with all the hours marked in her visage, who insisted that they should spend their honeymoon in an eight-day clock. To this arrangement he offered so vigorous a remonstrance, that he awoke, and saw 'the light of common day.' He offered a short thanksgiving that there was no witch for his wife, with all the hours in her face. Had Henry now so soon forgotten Patty Larkspur ?

It was nearly ten o'clock when Snow sat down to breakfast.

'Does *that* lady stay here ?' asked Snow of Thomas, with a slight tremor.

'I don't know, sir; she is now at breakfast in the next room;' and the waiter departed.

Snow took refuge from the thoughts of the past night in tea and toast, and was proceeding slowly yet surely in a most ample meal, when Thomes entered, and in his hand was the inconstant watch of Miss Larkspur. Snow looked at the instrument with a sullen eye, silently awaiting the consequences.

'The lady, sir,' said Thomas, 'cannot think what has happened to her watch; she bids me say that she is in the highest degree ashamed to trouble you, but fearing that——'

It was unnecessary for the man to say more; Snow took the watch, set it by his own, and returned it without a word to the waiter. He then proceeded with his breakfast. 'Never again will I boast of my chronometer,' thought Henry Snow; and, having finished his meal, he rose to go out. He met Thomas at the door.

'The lady, sir, is much obliged to you; is she too fast, still, sir ?'

'Much too fast,' said Henry Snow, with more bitterness in his expression than in all his life he had manifested. 'Tell her, Thomas, that I say she is very, very

much too fast.' And with the air of a man who feels satisfied that he has, by extraordinary firmness, put an end to an annoying connexion, Henry Snow took his hat, and, whistling airily, walked from the house.

We know not how it happened—let fate take the blame of it!—but Henry Snow wandered to the beach, and there he stood, thinking unutterable thoughts about the sea—whether his thoughts were of mermaids, or mussels, or of both, we know not; but sure we are that he was five fathom deep in meditation, when a fellow traveller in the Hastings coach leaped upon him with the familiarity of an old acquaintance.

'Fie, Bounce, fie!' said a lady; and it was no other than Miss Patty Larkspur, who, in the blandest accents, reproved her brown pointer that, dripping from the sea, had jumped upon Henry Snow, who, on that day, wore linen trousers, the whiteness of which had successfully rivalled the name of the wearer. 'I'm afraid he's rather wet,' said Miss Larkspur, with a conquering smile.

'A little,' answered Mr. Snow, feeling the salt-water penetrate to his skin.

'That is *not* a nautilus?' said the lady, desirous of a new subject, and pointing to a dead star-fish that lay upon the beach.

'I think not, ma'am,' replied Snow.

'I have seen a Cupid sailing in one,' observed Miss Larkspur.

'I had rather see him than go passenger with him,' said the bachelor, with a passing sternness of countenance.

'Not fond of the sea, sir?' asked Miss Larkspur, with a smile.

'That, ma'am, quite depends upon the way in which it is administered,' answered Snow, looking ferociously at the brown pointer.

'Well, you really must forgive poor Bounce,' said the lady; and then, as if pardon had been instantly awarded, she pointed to some far-off vessels, and asked with new vivacity, and another smile—'What are those

beautiful little ships, no bigger than swans, in the distance? They look lovely.'

'Look! 'mustn't trust to the looks of anything at Hastings,' said Snow.

'La, sir!' cried Miss Larkspur, in momentary astonishment; and then her eyes fell upon the region of Snow's third coat-button, and her mouth broke into a new smile, and she sighed, rather than said—'La, sir!'

''Great deal of contraband work here. Can't be sure of anybody; here there's no knowing the smuggler from the fair trader.' And Snow, intending to look through Miss Larkspur, bent his eyes upon her; they were, however, met and defeated by the large blue orbs of the spinster. Snow felt himself vanquished: never in his life had he been guilty of such rudeness to any specimen of the fair sex; and a sense of shame, of self-reproach rose within him, as Miss Larkspur, with a melancholy smile upon her face, turned up the beach. He felt strangely tempted to follow and apologize—he positively made one step in pursuit of the maiden, when he felt anew the coldness of the sea-water through his trousers, and stopped as if suddenly frozen. 'Never mind! the chances are we mayn't meet again,' thought Snow, and thus meanly satisfying himself, he walked along the beach and wooed the sun. It was four o'clock when he returned to his inn.

'Thomas, I dine out to-day—at my friend Whistleton's—but as I had no sleep last night, I shall be home for bed by nine.'

Thus spoke our bachelor, and having equipped himself for dinner, he betook himself to the house of his friend, where his pattern propriety, his urbanity, his tempered conviviality, made him a special favourite. Mrs. Whistleton had, for ten years at least, given it as her fixed opinion that there was but one Henry Snow in the universe. There was not, there never had been, there never could be, so correct a gentleman! Such was the reputation of our bachelor up to the hour of seven in the evening; when, so malignant was fortune,

Henry Snow was made to descend from his pedestal, and to range himself with, we fear, that numerous class of people, strongly suspected to be no better than they should be. The clock had struck seven, and Snow was glowing with his first bottle of wine, when a servant entered, and whispered to our bachelor.

'A man wants me!' said Snow; 'what man?'

'That is, sir, not a man, but——'

'But what?' asked Snow, with a perplexed look.

'I was told to whisper to you,' said the servant, 'but since——'

'Whisper! Pooh! Speak out,' said Snow.

'Then, sir,' said the footman, 'it is a lady—!'

'A lady!' exclaimed Snow, and he blushed with a prophetic sense of his danger.

'Hem!' cried Mr. Whistleton; and after a low chuckle and a steadfast look at Snow, he said, 'John, show the lady in.'

'No, no,' said Snow; and then he resolutely added, 'If you please, show her in.'

John quitted the room, and our bachelor was proceeding to inform his host of his suspicions respecting the visitor, when the servant returned.

'The lady, sir, won't come in; she's in a hired chaise, sir, taken by the hour, sir; but as the man disputes the time, and as, she says, she knows she can depend upon your watch, will you tell her if she's too slow or too fast?'

Saying which, John put Patty Larkspur's well-known timepiece in the palsied hand of our astonished bachelor.

'Too fast—much too fast,' said Snow, and he returned the corrected watch. The servant having left the room, Snow, amidst the smothered laughter of Whistleton and half-a-dozen bosom friends, began to narrate the history of his first meeting with Miss Larkspur, of his boasting in an evil moment of the unerring qualities of his own watch, and of the events of the preceding night.

'I couldn't have thought it of you,' cried Whistleton, purple in the face with laughter. Another elderly

gentleman chirped and crowed at 'Harry being found out at last.' A third tried to look solemn, and advised Snow 'to be more careful in such matters for the future' whilst one and all were stout in their belief that 'the lady wouldn't have come there for nothing—there must be something in it.'

In his walk from Whistleton's house to his tavern, Snow had formed his resolution—he would, the very next morning, retreat from Hastings. Finding the enemy too strong for him, he was determined to go off without beat of drum.

'Thomas, which is the first coach?' asked Snow of the waiter.

'Six o'clock, sir,' said Thomas.

'What places, Thomas?' demanded Snow.

'Only two inside,' answered Thomas.

'I'll take them both,' said Snow.

'Both!' cried Thomas.

'Both,' replied Snow, with vehemence; and thus depriving Patty Larkspur of a seat in the same vehicle with himself, he felt secure of future quiet. 'A glass of wine and water, and then I'll go to bed,' said Snow, with a lightened heart. Thomas returned with the beverage, and having placed it on the table, with a smile at his master, lingered.

'What now?' asked Snow.

'The watch, sir,' said Thomas. 'The lady wants to——'

'Give it me,' cried Snow; and with the manner of a man who feels that he is performing an annoying office for the last time, he seemingly adjusted Miss Larkspur's watch by his own, and, with a smile that she herself might have envied, returned it to the man, saying—'Tell her, a little too fast.' Snow retired to his room, and, ere he slept, wrote a letter, to be delivered to his friend Whistleton the next day, apologizing for his unceremonious departure from Hastings. At half-past five in the morning, Snow was up and arrayed for his journey. The coach drove to the door, Snow mounted the steps, and took his seat.

'All right!' said the coachman.

'Lady to come,' said the porter; and to the horror of Snow, the brown pointer came gambolling along the passage of the hotel, followed by its ever-smiling mistress, Patty Larkspur. 'Mr. Stanmore sent at eleven last night to say we might let his place if we could, as he didn't want to go before to-morrow,' said the porter.

'All right!' repeated the coachman, to the agony of our bachelor.

'Bless me!' said Miss Larkspur, smiling very energetically through her surprise, as she stared at Henry Snow. 'What! and are you returning to London? How very singular! Pray, sir, by your watch—your excellent watch—what is the precise hour?'

'Seven minutes past six,' replied Snow, who, could he have quitted the coach unseen by his persecutress, would have gladly forfeited his luggage.

'How very singular!' exclaimed Miss Larkspur, looking and smiling at her watch, 'my time to a second!'

Now, we must inform the reader that such unanimity between the watches was the more astonishing from an event of the past night; our bachelor having, doubtless with the best intentions, put Patty Larkspur's watch at least fifty minutes behind his own.

'Well, it *is* strange,' repeated Patty Larkspur. 'I always thought my watch was an excellent one, if properly regulated; it never went so well; but then'—and oh! the smile discharged at our hero—'but then, it was never in such punctual company!'

'Your departure is somewhat sudden, ma'am?' asked Snow, after half-an-hour's pause.

'Very,' replied Patty Larkspur; 'I had thought to be happy at Hastings for a month, but a letter followed me here, and a family affair of some delicacy has imperatively called me to London.'

'Do you stay long in London, ma'am?' asked our bachelor.

'Very uncertain,' answered our spinster; and the

answer destroyed the hopes of Snow, who had secretly determined on returning to Hastings in a couple of days, if assured of Miss Larkspur's detention in the metropolis. The time passed, and, at the appointed hour, the coach arrived in London.

'What 's o'clock, sir?' asked Patty Larkspur, with an ill-suppressed sigh.

'Permit me, madam;' and Snow, resolving to be polite for the last time, corrected Miss Larkspur's watch by his own, and returning it to her, vanished like a flash of light.

'Thank you, sir,' said Miss Larkspur; but there was no one to receive her gratitude; our bachelor running at the time towards his lodgings, the which he purposely arrived at through many winding passages. He had upon the road desired the guard to keep his luggage at the office until sent for.

Henry Snow had been a week from Hastings, and sitting one morning at his breakfast his thoughts wandered to Patty Larkspur. 'What a woman!' he mentally exclaimed; 'well, thank my stars! it was a narrow escape; but I am at last well rid of her.'

'I beg your pardon, sir,' said our bachelor's landlady, 'but I forgot to give you this little parcel; it came after you were in bed last night.' Saying which she placed a small packet in the hand of Snow, and quitted the apartment. Snow paused ere he broke the seal: it was black: he expected two or three legacies, and was therefore greatly shocked at the funereal character of the wax. As he sat holding the unopened packet, the friends whom he had for the last five years expected to die, passed one by one before him. Was it his dear aunt Bridget? or that best of uncles, Jeremiah? Having nerved himself for the worst, Snow, with reverent fingers, broke the seal, and casting away three or four envelopes, drew forth a letter; something still remained: he pursued his task, and who shall tell his feelings, who shall paint his face, when Henry Snow laid his thumb and finger upon Patty Larkspur's watch! Had the woman given it to

him ? Was she a witch, and had she by her ' so potent art,' shut up some devil in the works to worry and destroy him ? But there was a letter ! With desperate hand he broke the seal, and, as if staring at a sheeted ghost, he looked at the contents, they were as follows :—

' My dear Sir,—I know you will pardon the step I have taken. Yes, that considerate delicacy you possess for the wants and wishes of your fellow-creatures will, I am sure, forgive the seeming liberty. I can never forget, I can never repay, your kind attentions. Deprived of the benefit of communion with you, my watch has been three times down. I cannot tell the hour ; I wake and think it must be broad daylight, and I hear the watchman cry ' Past two.' I have been told—a thousand times been told—that the watch was an excellent watch. In the vanity of my heart, I have thought so ; but you, sir, have found how little it is worth, how meanly I ought to value it, if deprived of your guidance, if wanting your regulation. I fear the watch is now become wholly useless ; however, if you will deign to accept it—if, for a short month or so, you will condescend to wear it, to correct it by your own chronometer—to check its haste, and to urge its speed, as its wants may require, the watch may yet—by the very force of sympathy—recover its wonted fidelity, and again faithfully mark the time to her who feels that to her time is every day becoming more irksome. I am, dear sir, truly yours,

' Martha Larkspur.

' P.S.—If, in a month, I should not send for the watch, may I ask you still to wear it, as the legacy of one who has done with time, and begun—but my pen falters ! '

The first determination of Snow was to send back the watch, and to leave the country under a false name. That he should ever have been the fool to vaunt the virtues of his own watch, to attempt to correct the wanderings of a spinster's ! And now, to

be asked to wear the fiend in his pocket! No; he would instantly return it to Miss Larkspur, and with a letter that should—but where to find her? She had given no address, and no intelligence could Snow obtain from his landlady whereby he might discover the melancholy owner. And then the black seal! Poor woman! She had doubtless suffered some domestic affliction! Yes, that was made too plain by the postscript. She was evidently a woman of education, and—for the watch was surrounded by brilliants—of some property. These thoughts passed rapidly through the troubled brain of our bachelor, who, in his forty-third year, was seriously perplexed, for the first time. At length he ceased to think, resigning the matter to the hands of destiny.

Henry Snow was constant in his attendance at the —— Institution. It was about three weeks after the receipt of Miss Larkspur's letter, that, having listened attentively to a lecture on chemistry, he was about to leave the theatre, considerably edified on the subject of acids, when a tall young man, who had sat behind him during the discourse, requested the favour of his ear at a neighbouring tavern. The stranger was not a person to be refused, for he had very large moustaches, with beard and hair disposed after Eastlake's pet bandit; he was, moreover, dressed in a half-military style, which left it a matter of doubt, with waiters at least, whether he was a lieutenant-colonel or a major.

'I believe, sir,' said the hairy young gentleman to Snow, 'I believe, sir, you have a watch in your pocket?'

Now, the stranger and our bachelor were alone in a room; and Snow, in his ignorance, thought it possible that a pickpocket might wear moustaches; and therefore he merely stepped back, and returned an anxious look at the questioner.

'Your name, sir?' said the stranger.

'Snow, sir; Henry Snow,' said our bachelor, getting near the bell.

'I have seen the watch, sir; and now, sir, upon your

honour, is it not the property of a lady ?' thundered forth the stranger.

'Certainly, sir,' said Snow, 'and if you can tell me where the lady is to be found——'

And saying no more, Snow took Patty Larkspur's watch from his waistcoat pocket, when the stranger approached him, and bending towards the chronometer, after surveying it through an eyeglass, he rose to his full height, and thus addressed our hero—

'Sir, you are a villain !'

'Sir !' exclaimed Snow, and he wanted breath for another syllable.

'My cousin, sir, my cousin ! You are aware, sir,' and the stranger twisted his moustache round his forefinger, 'that some things can only be washed out with blood ! You will not deny, sir, that you know a lady named Larkspur ?'

'I met her, sir, at——'

'Met her !' vociferated the young gentleman; 'what ! a woman is to be robbed of——'

'Robbed, sir !' cried Snow; 'mind what you are about: this watch I can prove was——'

'I spoke not of the watch, sir, but of my cousin's heart. Poor dear girl ! but chance has discovered to me her betrayer; she, patient saint, would have died with the secret—as she *will* die, but not, I thank Heaven—' and he flung up his right arm—'but not alone !'

'Is Miss Larkspur ill ?' asked Snow, not knowing what to say.

The stranger smiled bitterly upon Snow, and, almost bursting into tears, exclaimed, shaking his head—

'That you could see the ruin you have made ! But you shall hear from me, sir; to-morrow, sir.'

And with this threat Patty Larkspur's cousin left the tavern, and Henry Snow returned to his uncomfortable home, though not before he had promised a handsome reward to the waiter if he could discover for him the abode of the lady, which intelligence the man was enabled soon after to communicate, having been informed of

it, though with strict injunctions to be secret, by the cousin himself.

At nine o'clock the next morning, Henry Snow stood at the door of Miss Larkspur.

'Could he see her?' for he was resolved to return the watch into her own hands. 'Could he see Miss Larkspur?'

The servant shook her head, and laconically replied—

'Sir, she's dying!'

Snow started, when the servant considerately added—

'But if you'll give your name——'

Snow complied with the suggestion, and having waited some minutes, was requested to walk 'very softly' upstairs. He entered the room, and saw Miss Larkspur, very pale indeed, seated in an easy chair.

'I am sorry, madam,' said Henry Snow, and he was proceeding into his grief, when he was interrupted by 'a short, shrill shriek' from the lady, and a shower of tears.

'I am afraid, sir, I have been very troublesome to you?' said Patty Larkspur.

'Not at all, ma'am,' replied Snow, softened by the appearance of the spinster, into a benevolent falsehood; 'my purpose in calling upon you is to——'

'Your cousin, ma'am!' proclaimed the servant, with a look of horror.

'That rash boy! If he sees you here, Mr. Snow—for the sake of your precious life—I care not for myself—but hide! hide!'

'Hide, ma'am!' exclaimed the old bachelor, quite bewildered at the proposal.

'If not,' said Miss Larkspur, and she spoke with a dull, solemn voice; 'if not—I know his temper—there'll be murder.'

'He's coming upstairs, ma'am,' cried the girl.

'Hide! hide! for the love of mercy—to save blood—hide! hide!'

And Patty Larkspur—what cannot woman do for him she loves?—moved by her fears for the life of Snow, rose above sickness, and, vigorously seconded by her

maid, almost ere our bachelor was aware of it, twirled him into an empty closet, and buttoned the door; at the same instant, the 'armed heels' of Patty's cousin were heard by Snow upon the stairs, and in another instant his terrible voice sounded in the apartment.

'William,' said Miss Larkspur, weakly; she had again fallen into the chair, quite exhausted by her late exertion.

'Gracious powers! Patty, you are worse; yes, it is in vain to cheat you with hope—poor blighted flower, you are dying.'

'I know it,' said Patty Larkspur, 'and am content to die.'

'Oh, villain, villain!' cried Cousin William, and he strode up and down the room; 'but by this time he has my message, and in an hour hence——'

'What mean you, William?' said Patty; 'why do you frown so? why roll your eyes? what horrible thoughts possess you?'

'I have found him!' cried William, in a sepulchral note.

'Him!' said Patty Larkspur.

'Snow!' and William roared out the name, to the terror of its owner in the closet.

'Well!' cried Patty, trembling at the word.

'He dies!' said William, in thorough-bass.

'No, no, no, William! If it be my last effort—upon my knees I ask it—he is innocent—'tis I who——'

'Innocent! What, have I not seen you waste, day by day, since that accursed morning you went to Hastings? Do I not know that—(there are none but Susan here, and she is faithful)—that he took two places back to London—that you are no longer the same blithe, happy being that—' and here Cousin William became very impressive—'and will not the ancestors of our house pursue me if I suffer—what is that?' and Cousin William glanced at Patty Larkspur's watch, laid by Snow upon the table.

'The watch, sir, the watch!' said Susan.

'And has he had the meanness—has he further insulted you by sending——'

'No, sir, he didn't send it,' said Susan.

'Not send! Why, there—he—ha!—that closet door!—what moves it?'

The closet was small, and the door shutting close upon Snow, and Snow, with the threats of Cousin William, beginning to tremble, proclaimed the culprit in his hiding-place.

'William!' shrieked Patty Larkspur, and fell upon her knees; when, the closet button being turned by the indignant thumb and finger of the young gentleman, Henry Snow stood in all his dark iniquity revealed.

Cousin William, after a great effort, said, with apparent composure, 'Very well, sir; follow me,' and quitted the house; Patty Larkspur, however, preventing Snow from obeying the orders of her murderous cousin.

Snow was much affected by the devotion shown to him by Patty Larkspur; like a Benedick, he had 'never thought to marry,' but we will not hold the reader by a long narration of the causes which prevailed upon our old bachelor. Ere two hours had elapsed from the exit of the fiery William, Henry Snow had made a formal offer of his hand to Patty Larkspur, who consented to accept it, with this condition, if her life were spared.

About a twelvemonth after their marriage—for the life of Patty was spared—Mrs. Snow fell into a serious fit of illness. We know little of the domestic felicity of the pair up to that period; we only know that the husband would look into the wife's face, glance at her watch, and say, with a sigh, 'Too slow, much too slow.' For the watch itself—great deception, as Mrs. Snow averred—had been practised on her: that the watch she had bought for pure gold, was only metal gilt, and the brilliants were, to her confusion, discovered to be only tolerable crystals. Cousin William having, as Mrs. Snow lamented, lost his patrimony at hazard, con-

descended to shave, and, Mr. Snow having advanced the money, to re-enter life as a linendraper.

Mr. Snow died at sixty, having survived his wife about nine months. He had a favourite nephew, to whom he left the bulk of his property, enhanced, as he said, by this golden advice—

'George, my dear George, if you live to be an old bachelor, never, never attempt to regulate the watch of a middle-aged maid!'

LIZZY'S 'BACK HAIR'

'No, I'm determined o' that, they shan't touch Lizzy's hair. The girl's as good a right to bands as any lady in the parish, and if she isn't to go to school without losing her back hair, she shall stop at home and learn nothing.'

Such was the declaration of Barbara Dock, delivered, too, with a tone and manner that proved that she had well weighed the consequences of her will, and was, at any suffering, prepared to maintain it.

The Docks were about the poorest family of the pauper village of Nettlefield. Days came and went, and many a day they knew no better feeding than one half meal. In winter they shivered at a fireless hearth —stern, hard-featured, inexorable Poverty was ever 'lord of their home and hospitality.' And yet Pride—worldly pride—took her seat in the miserable cottage, and surrounded by want and squalor in their foulest forms and most degrading spirit, had nevertheless her miserable delights, her small whims and fantasies; wayward, as though she played the fine fantastic lady in the finest drawing-room. It was this pride that with witch-like malice whispered to Mrs. Barbara Dock, 'Come what will, preserve at any cost your daughter Lizzy's back hair.'

A few words will inform the reader in what manner Lizzy's hair was perilled.

The village of Nettlefield was about a mile and a half distant from a small, yet substantial country town, whose richer inhabitants had built a school for the children of the very poor. Now, it was one of the laws of the girls' school—a law passed in a common parliament of rich and respectable matrons—that the pauper pupils should be required to forego the vanity of curls

and bands. We know not whether these excellent women had ever read *The Unloveliness of Love-locks*, and other pamphlets born in the good old Puritan times for the special discomfiture and conversion of those who suffered their souls to be endangered by their hair; they, however, legislated in the cropping spirit of such writers, and required of each pupil that not only should she eschew bands and front curls, but that her 'back hair' should be cut off in decent closeness to the nape of the neck. It was not thought seemly that poverty should rejoice in flowing tresses. There was danger in them. The lady-committee were doubtless right. There have been she-Samsons, carrying worse than death in their wanton ringlets.

Now, Lizzy Dock was a rough-made looking wench of fourteen. Handsome she was not, save in the eyes of her mother. Indeed, throughout the neighbourhood, Lizzy Dock was frequently saluted with words that must have been a sharp lesson to the conceit of female beauty; the swains of Nettlefield would, in their own unsophisticated Doric, tell her their private and public opinion of her personal charms; nevertheless, Lizzy Dock had not the weakness or the humility to believe them. If, too, Lizzy was proud of anything in this world, it was of her hair. It was of the colour of thistledown, and by dint of constant coaxing, she had got it to give indications of a backward curl. Now, with these white locks, did Lizzy astound the propriety of the girls' school at ——. She knew not the mystery of the alphabet, and was sent at fourteen years old to become a scholar in the hornbook of charity.

Lizzy returned to the cottage at dinner-time—to no dinner—and told her mother the fiat of the governess. Whereupon Mrs. Barbara Dock delivered herself of the sentence which opens our story—'If she wasn't to go to school without losing her back hair, she should stop at home and learn nothing.'

Lizzy returned to school bearing this determination, a little modified in its phraseology, to the governess. 'Her mother couldn't think that she should lose her

hair.' Whereupon Lizzy was sent home with a desire not to return to the school again until properly shorn. And Lizzy returned not, but, keeping her back hair, stayed at home.

In an hour at most, the whole story was talked over at every hearth in Nettlefield. Every one wondered at the pride and impudence of Mrs. Dock; and not a few predicted a wretched, sinful ending for Lizzy; yes—'It might easily be guessed what her back hair would bring her to.'

The committee of ladies, informed of the waywardness of Mrs. Dock, declared one and all that, amid all the serious doings of human life, this impertinence to the patronesses of the school was the gravest misdeed they had ever heard of. Some judgment must certainly fall upon the woman for her pride and wickedness. However, human charity prevailed, for the lady patronesses, determining that the woman Dock should not be left to perish in her perversity, resolved upon a benevolent pilgrimage to her habitation. It was at first arranged that the whole committee should present themselves before the forlorn widow; but, on second thoughts, the intention was abandoned, lest it might produce some serious shock on the nerves of the offender; whereupon it was resolved that Mrs. Cuckfield, the squire's lady, a gentlewoman renowned for dignity at freezing-point, should alone read a terrible lesson to the stubborn Mrs. Dock. It was especially necessary that an example should be made of the woman, that she should be taught to feel the presumption of her doings;—and who so capable of confounding her as the squire's lady? Straightway Mrs. Cuckfield deposited herself in her phaeton, and drove to Nettlefield.

A sudden silence fell upon the village, as the phaeton rolled smoothly towards it. Women criticised at every doorstep; the children left off playing and squabbling, and, with finger in mouth, looked bashfully at the squire's lady's carriage. The village curs seemed struck with shamefacedness, for they ventured not the weakest

bark at the horses' heels, but slunk up in doorways, and, with quivering noses and abashed countenances, sat silently upon their haunches, hardly venturing a leer at the squire's lady.

The phaeton stopped at Mrs. Dock's cottage. Whereupon Mrs. Dock appeared at the door, attended by Lizzy—whose back hair, by-the-way, was in the most insolent condition of curl—and dropt a dutiful curtsey to Mrs. Cuckfield, who, with lady-like wrath in her countenance, deigned no recognition; but with very rigid eyelids, passed into the cottage. In a moment, Mrs. Dock passed her apron over one of the two chairs, and presented it to the squire's lady. Mrs. Cuckfield threw a glance upon the ragged rush-bottom, then, arranging her gown, sank upon the seat. No Lord Chief Justice ever took his place upon the bench with greater dignity. As for Mrs. Dock, she instantly divined the cause of Mrs. Cuckfield's visit, and, though a little flustered by the solemnity that she felt was about to begin, she nevertheless strung herself up for the contest; and in a very few moments her face looked dogged and stony. Indeed, it may be truly said, that she was armed to the teeth for the encounter.

'You've had a prize in the lottery, eh, Mrs. Dock?' said Mrs. Cuckfield, with the cutting voice of an east wind.

'Not at all, ma'am,' answered the woman. 'Prizes, ma'am, don't come to poor people, ma'am.'

'Not a prize! Well, I declare, I thought of course you were suddenly become very rich. And you're as poor and destitute as ever?' asked the squire's lady.

'If you please, ma'am,' replied Mrs. Dock.

'And I suppose nothing particular in the cupboard?' said Mrs. Cuckfield.

The poor woman made no verbal answer; but moving a pace or two, opened a corner-cupboard door, and showed its empty shelves. There was nothing truly in it. 'We haven't tasted meat—not so much as a bit of bacon—these two months.'

'I thought as much,' cried Mrs. Cuckfield, as though she was fast coming on the guilt of the offender. 'I thought as much.'

'Wages is dreadful, now,' said Mrs. Dock, with a sigh. 'I don't know what things will come to. Them as are poor had better be in their graves.'

'Perhaps, some of them,' answered the squire's lady, with slight bitterness.

'For my part, ma'am,' cried Mrs. Dock, 'I don't care how soon.'

'Why, you wicked creature! you ungrateful, wicked woman! Don't you blush—aren't you ashamed of yourself?' cried the squire's lady.

'What for, ma'am?' asked Mrs. Dock, with Arcadian ignorance.

'*You*, who ought to know your place? *You* poor destitute creatures, with nothing but your hard labour to live upon—you with an empty cupboard, half-naked, and without one of the comforts of life about you—you to dare to—why, it's flying in the face of Providence! Wretched woman! don't you expect the roof to fall, or the earth to open and swallow you up?'

'What for, ma'am?' again asked Mrs. Dock.

'What for? Turn round your back, girl!' cried Mrs. Cuckfield to Lizzy, who instantly obeyed the order. 'There,' cried Mrs. Cuckfield, pointing her finger to the felonious back hair, 'look at that and blush.'

'What for, ma'am?' for the third time asked Mrs. Dock.

Mrs. Cuckfield was about to storm; but she remembered the dignity of the squire's lady, and with praiseworthy calmness, considering the effort it cost her, asked, 'Am I to understand, woman, that you will not permit your girl to submit to the school crop? That, in a word, you insist upon her wearing bands, and keeping her back hair?'

'Poor people have a right to their hair, ma'am,' said the stolid Mrs. Dock.

'It is true, then?' cried the squire's lady.

'Poor people have as good a right to what they're born with,' said Mrs. Dock, 'as the rich. Quite as good a right.'

'Was there ever such assurance?' exclaimed Mrs. Cuckfield.

'If God Almighty didn't think so,' said Mrs. Dock, 'God Almighty wouldn't make rich folks and poor folks all alike.'

'Well, if ever!' ejaculated the squire's lady.

'Lizzy 's as good a right to her back hair as the Queen of England,' cried Mrs. Dock.

She had said enough. Human presumption had passed its limit, all wide as it is, and the squire's lady, almost aghast at the cottager's wife, made for the threshold. Then pity for human infirmity made her suddenly pause. She gathered herself up for one last remonstrance. 'Mrs. Dock, you understand, that unless your girl conforms to the regulations of the school she cannot be received there. In which case, she will grow up, poor creature, ignorant as the pigs. For the last time, will you cut off her back hair?'

Mrs. Dock merely replied, 'Poor people, ma'am, have as good right to their back hair, ma'am, as the richest in the land, ma'am.'

The squire's lady passed from the cottage into her phaeton, and without another word drove off.

The school committee were more than astonished at the report of Mrs. Cuckfield. Their curiosity was piqued by the presumption of Mrs. Dock; and one by one the ladies visited her, as, indeed, they would have visited the exhibition of some strange animal. To one and all, however, Mrs. Dock observed, that 'Lizzy had as good right to her back hair as the Queen of England.'

Lizzy did *not* go to school. She, however, kept her back hair, and, with such adornment, grew up, in the prophetic words of Mrs. Cuckfield, 'ignorant as the pigs.'

Miserable vanity! thinks the reader, that in such

conditions sacrifices mental hope to outward ornament. Alas, good sir, 'tis very well to shake the head in sad reproof of pauper Lizzy Dock, and her foolish mother; but how many are there, with all the world's comforts about them, who, in some way or other, do not sacrifice an inward excellence for some sort of 'back hair?'

THE ACTRESS AT 'THE DUKE'S'

'And shall we have fifty little angels hung upon strings?'

'At least fifty.'

'And a dragon to spit fire?—And a sea in a storm?—and invisible machines to break the whole stage into bits?'

'With a view of chaos, and a battle by the elements.'

Let not the reader hastily suspect a maiden who asks thus familiarly of mighty and terrible objects; let not the old man who replies to each query, become, even for a minute, the victim of sudden prejudice. The girl is no daring neophyte, seeking knowledge of forbidden things; the man no bloodless wizard teaching wicked sorcery. Though their discourse is of angels in a somewhat vulgar state of independence; though a dragon mixes in their conversation, and chaos itself takes part in their colloquy, the speakers are persons of the gentlest manners, of the most innocent dispositions. They seek not, by evil incantations, to draw the moon from out her sphere—nay, if we may count dining as naught, they never had designs upon a single head of cattle. In brief, we have introduced two simple children of this earth. The girl has no other magic than that of bright blue eyes, a complexion of the most delicate white and pink, a mouth that looks as though nothing but goodness can flow from it, and brown hair, falling in curled lumps about certainly the prettiest neck in the universe. The man has a mysterious visage; but, though a favourite black cat lies in a ball at his left foot, he is, we assure the reader, no conjuror.

Yet the reader must desire to learn the names and real conditions of the parties; we hasten to satisfy

him. The maiden is known by the homely syllables of Peggy Simpson, the dutiful child of a poor widow; the man—will the obliging reader only imagine a flourish of trumpets as we walk our hero on the page?—the man is no other than John Downes!

'And who is John Downes?'

Falling in with the jest intended by the inquirer—receiving his assumed ignorance as an excellent whim—we will return the humour by stating, what he knows full well—namely, that John Downes is a man 'long conversant with the plays and actors of the original company, under the patent of Sir William Davenant, at his theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, opened there in 1662. And, as book-keeper and prompter, continued so until October, 1706; he writing out all the parts in each play, and attending every morning to the actors' rehearsals, and their performances in the afternoons.' Thus, tried by the vulgar test, his company, John Downes stands forth illustrious. He was of the cabinet where Dryden had a seat, and Otway, and Wycherley, and Congreve. He 'held the book' to Betterton, and gave the cue to Mrs. Barry.

At the precise time of our story, John Downes was busily employed in writing out the parts of a new drama—a forthcoming wonder, that, in the belief of the 'spirited proprietor,' Sir William Davenant, was to set all London in a blaze; the great fire was to be nothing to it. Human passion, in the opinion of the indefatigable manager, becoming trite and powerless on an audience, he turned his back on poets, and wisely made his lowest bow to the scene-painter. Mr. Betterton was very well; but Sir William had engaged (at an enormous expense) a dancing troupe from Paris. Mr. Shakspeare had, in his day, written tolerable verse; but happily, the manager could now boast of two excellent fiddlers. There was, moreover, a report of a certain wise bay pony that, between the acts, was to tell by cards the fortunes of any of the audience; but, we presume, Sir William, like a skilful and prosperous general, took the town without the necessity of bringing

up his horse; and thus the cavalry was reserved for future managers and a more enlightened era.

We have said John Downes was intent on one of his multifarious duties; in such labour, however, he was zealously assisted by the inquiring Peggy, who, with her mother, had, in an evil hour, taken lodgings in the tenement henceforth to become classical by the indwelling of the prompter at 'The Duke's.' It was even so: in the back room of a third floor in not the most ostentatious part of Drury Lane, lived John Downes; and in the floor immediately above, lived Peggy Simpson, a cordial, frank-hearted girl of sixteen, with a face of sunshine, and a voice like a silver bell.

Hapless Peggy! how were her days and nights perplexed and shadowed by the prompter! From only a little week after her sojourn in Drury Lane, may be dated her new life—her second eventful existence. On three occasions, and each following with fatal precipitancy, John Downes had given Peggy and her mother free entrance to the play-house in Lincoln's Inn. From that time Peggy became haunted; she no longer lived in a dull tangible world—in a land of figures and counters; but inhabited a sphere pieced out and glorified by the imagination: all things, touched by the new faculty born in the theatre, took new and high semblances; her daily household actions had a foreign grace; she would ask the hour of the day in unconscious blank verse, and ascend the attic stairs as though she felt she swept them with a train of velvet and minever!

What was worse, the actors conspired to heighten the malady of Peggy; for, in the pursuit of their profession, they would continually infest the lodging of the prompter. Yes; in the primitive days of our story, even the first tragedian would sometimes call, and on foot too, on John Downes. Now, had Peggy never visited the theatre, she would have seen in its artists common men and women; but, having beheld them in their artificial glories, to separate the truth from the fiction was impossible. Though she looked on the daw in its

nakedness, she could not forget the radiant feathers of the poet. Thus, when Mr. Betterton mounted the staircase. Peggy would peep from over the banister with a face of awe and wondering; his most homespun syllables fell upon her sense like the note of fate; there was an impressive regality in his very footsteps. Mrs. Saunderson, though the most amiable and quiet of gentlewomen, was still a shrew queen vociferating death; and Mr. John Nokes, though he should only ask—'Is Mr. Downes at home?' would, to the ears of Peggy, utter a comedy of the most convulsing humour. But to these intoxicating illusions succeeded a weariness of spirits, a keener sense of the drudgery entailed upon our heroine, who, ere she dwelt within the circle of the magician, was content with the hire of a sempstress, whenever good fortune made the golden offer. It was, however, certain that, since her removal into Drury Lane, there had been fewer calls upon her needle: whilst it cannot be denied that her impatience of the employment became on each occasion more acute. She had seen princes give away kingdoms; lords and gentlemen throw bags of gold to chambermaids and valets; and her head swimming with such generous deeds, she could not, as before, work with tranquillity twelve long hours for sixpence. It is true, like a good and loving girl, she laboured for the precarious subsistence of a mother; but, oft remembering the bountiful trick of fortune in the case of an old woman in the last play, her heart would sink at the poor pittance—the reward of a day's sewing. In truth, it was hard for Peggy to toil with material needle and thread for at most ten meals a week, whilst in imagination she was now seated at an Egyptian banquet beaming burning love on Antony! However, to proceed with the interrogations of our pretty scribe—for all this time she has copied and talked, talked and copied, with the old prompter.

'And is it true that the king, and the duke, and all the court will be at the house?'

'His excellent majesty, and his royal highness, and

the beautiful madam—but, Peggy, surely it is time for dinner ? '

Peggy put down her pen, and the prompter having promised her a seat in the gallery on the second night of the new play, she was proceeding to her own room, though we fear not to dine, when the voice of Nokes sounded from below. Peggy was fixed upon the stairs and, as the Aristophanes of Lincoln's Inn (for John Nokes with a wise preference, not yet obsolete, thought no words so good as his own) mounted to the third floor, the girl could not deny herself a furtive peep at the wit of 'The Duke's.' As she glanced down upon the wonder, the paragon of mimes looked up: their eyes met, in an instant Peggy, with a face of scarlet, had flown like a young partridge to her room, and Nokes, with dropped jaw, staring eyeballs, and hands dangling at his sides, gasped at the door of the prompter. Nokes, with all his genius, never acted so well; simply, because then he did not act.

'Why, why, John—what do you want, John ?' asked Downes, opening the door upon the astonished player.

'Come about my part,' replied Nokes, his eyes still raised towards the bannister.

'Your part ! no, that can't serve, John ! Ha ! ha ! When did you ever come for a part ? '

'No matter for that. 'Tisn't my fault if I can talk better than Mr. Dryden, with all his brains, can write; but as the king is coming, and as my friend the duke will be present—I—I say, Jack,' and Nokes enforced the query by plunging his elbow into the stomach of the prompter, 'what little pigeon 's that in the garret ? '

'Pooh ! a child, a—there 's your part, John;' and Downes gave Nokes the superfluity.

'Oh, this is the stuff I'm to swallow, eh ? this is—' and, glancing at the page, Nokes drew his lips into a point, then with both eyes looked down upon his nose, raised them again to the manuscript, and, rocking himself twice or thrice backwards and forwards, exclaimed, 'John Downes, where didst get thy new

writing-master ? Thy whole alphabet used to straggle upon the paper like sticks in a hedge, and now the words slip and glide along like little snakes. As I'm a chaste actor and a gentleman,' (and here Nokes, with affected gravity, lifted the page to his nose,) 'the paper's odorous of female fingers. Come, who is she, Jack ? Oh, there's rank in every flourish ; at least a maid of honour in every hair-turn.'

John Downes was a grave man ; his *Roscius Anglicanus* [1], a work to be cut in leaves of brass, sufficiently attests his serious temper ; hence the banter of John Nokes was the thinnest of thin air against the determination of the prompter, who spoke no word of Peggy. Nokes talked and jested, but Downes continued dull and dumb. The actor, however, determined upon his inquiry, though he extracted no syllable from the prompter, succeeded in carrying him off to dine with him at the Roebuck, a house at that time much honoured by the visits of Sir William's troupe.

'Miserable talk this,' cried Nokes, turning over the leaves of his part. 'Ha ! well ;' and the dinner being despatched, he swallowed bumper after bumper of Bristol milk ; 'as usual, I must take the poor devil of an author under my wing !'

'You forget, John,' replied Downes, with a somewhat reverential air, 'you forget the piece is written by the manager.'

'So I do ; and that's strange, seeing the fuss that's made about it. The whole stage is like a toy-shop. Sir William Davenant—bless his modesty—brings forth like an empress. There's flags hoisted, ribbons flying, and straw laid before the theatre. Now, when poor Shadwell's near his time—'

'Nay, John, I can't hear this. At "the Duke's," Sir William is no more than any other poet ; Mr. Shadwell, or even Mr. Otway, has, at least from me—'

[1] By-the-way, we have no wish that the reader should seek to consult this somewhat rare tract, lest he might discover certain unimportant anachronisms committed in our history.

'False, Jack, false!' And Nokes continued to swallow his favourite drink. 'False! You know when the manager's about to hatch, rehearsals are solemn as funerals; you know that Sir Billy struts and strides, as though his nose were still as high as Cæsar's; and as for you, you watch him like a queen's midwife, hoping and praying for a prince-royal.'

'And doesn't Sir William always succeed? Aren't his pieces always acted?' asked Downes in a triumphant tone.

'Doesn't he always write his own play-bills?' answered Nokes, who, with every glass, was becoming more bitter and captious. 'Give Settle the same chance, and do you think he'll ever fail?'

'Come, John; you know there's spite in all this. You know that, because Sir William insists on keeping you to his words—'

'That's the worst of the tyranny; for, if they were the words of anybody else, the slavery might be tolerable.'

'See what Sir William has done for us!' cried Downes, with all the inherent loyalty of a prompter. 'See to what a height he has raised the whole profession!'

'A part of it,' asserted Nokes; 'the women, now, who are to hang from the clouds in the next piece.'

'I'm of your way of thinking, Mr. Downes,' observed a new comer, a thin, pale young man, with weak eyes, and a thread of a voice. 'Sir William knows the town; and the town has had a surfeit of dulness. No doubt Betterton would like to play Hamlet six days in the week; now, for my part, I can't see so very much in *Hamlet;* I speak my mind, and I think it a very heavy thing.'

'What part do you act in it?' asked Nokes, his eyes twinkling disdain.

'Rosencrantz,' replied the other, with the air of an injured man.

'Ah!' rejoined Nokes, 'which satisfactorily accounts for your opinion.' And Nokes, with renewed vehe-

mence applying himself to his potations, maintained a dogged silence, whilst the prompter and the small actor discussed the merits of the forthcoming novelty. The tyro player dwelt with eloquence on the new 'clothing' of the piece, and the ingenious 'flying machines;' but when he came to the 'perspective scenes,' expressly painted for the spectacle, his raptures knew no bounds; he was in full voice, when the muddled Nokes coarsely silenced the enthusiast.

'Hold your shouting, you babe in a wood! Pero-spec-ti-tive scenes? Mark my words, Jack, these vermilion fellows, with their harlequin-jacket skies. and their seas of ochre, and their Peaks of Teneriffe, and their palaces of the Great Cham—mark what I say —they'll turn the brains of the town through its eyes. They'll destroy our glorious art? Player and poet, both will be lost? Rare old Ben, and dear sweet William, Jack Nokes, and Tom Betterton, we shall all—' and though the eyes of Nokes were almost set, they for a moment flashed with the prophet, as, striking the table with his clenched fist, he exclaimed, his voice deepening till it ended in a lachrymose groan, 'we shall all be painted out—painted out—painted out.' And again Nokes drank.

'But, my dear John,' began the prompter, in a soothing voice.

'Poor Jack Downes!' interrupted Nokes, in a tone of commiseration, 'you are painted out, too. In a little time, and you'll cease to hold the book to men and women; no, you'll have to prompt nothing but earthquakes, and give the word to nobody but dragons and flying-fish. Yes, I am told that henceforth the prompter is to shoe the horses; for I do hear that we are to have cattle on the boards. I am told—' Here, what with emotion and many cups, Nokes sank into hopeless maudlin. 'I am told that in this very piece—the Lord forgive Sir William! what we must come to —I am told they're going to put a pony over the head—of—of—of dear Mrs. Saunderson!'

The bare conception of such indignity was too much

for the professional sensibility of Nokes. There is a point in sorrow and indignation where language stops. At this point Nokes had evidently arrived, for he sat silent, and, in a short time, snored. Fortunately, the sleeper did not act that day, and was thus left in profound repose by the prompter. It being nearly three o'clock, Downes betook himself to the theatre, attended by the young actor, who, ere he quitted the sleeping comedian, finished his liquor for him, and then ventured a few remarks on his merits. 'He was certainly a clever man; but seriously, and quite in confidence, did not Mr. Downes think him considerably overpaid?'

Refreshed by two hours' sleep, Nokes gradually returned to the full consciousness of a low comedian. His mental powers were, however, considerably quickened by a conversation proceeding from a party huddled in a distant corner of the room. The speakers, ignorant of the presence of any intruder—for Nokes had lain on a bench behind a table, consecrated to the actors of 'The Duke's' and separated by a wooden screen from common eyes—talked freely of their conspiracy. Yes, it was but too evident to Nokes that a plot, fraught with incalculable mischief, was in course of concoction by the party. With pricked ears and repressed breath, he sat motionless and listened.

'Are you sure the king will be there?' asked one.

'The king and all his court,' was the reply.

'Then,' said the voice of a third, 'we'll go armed; and, when I give the word, let fly among 'em.'

The wig of Nokes seemed self-lifted from his head, his tongue became a stone in his mouth, and, lest the chattering of his teeth should betray him, he thrust his nether lip between them. Could he quit the room unseen, the assassins might be secured; were he discovered in the attempt, they, doubtless, had daggers, and would not pause to use them. Was ever one of 'The Duke's' company in such a dilemma?

'We'll show that Englishmen know their rights,' cried a conspirator.

'And will have 'em!' said a determined second.

'Or else know the reason why!' concluded the third.

Nokes, becoming assured that he was in no dream, nerved himself to the courage of taking a peep; he rose, and, noiseless as though his whole frame was changed into wool, mounted the bench, and, taking a brief look over the screen, saw the threatening triumvirate. The most marked and earnest of the party was a youth of about eighteen; his closely cropped head, his keen eye, his firmly pressed mouth and dilated nostril, though his nose was the reverse of Roman, marked him the Cassius of the scene; to these, we may add, an air of licence—a manner popularly known as vagabond. The second, and the most refined of the three, seemed two years older than his emphatic coadjutor; his dress was more succinct and neat, his hair, evidently not neglected by its master, was in close curl about a handsome, open face—alas! far too well favoured to fester in Palace Yard,—and his eye beamed with the frank spirit of youth.

'What!' cried he, 'if my father does make for the court, shan't I show myself above the prejudice?'

'To be sure,' cried the youth on the right of the speaker; 'what 's custom to a man's country!'

The author of this patriotic sentiment, being seated with his back towards Nokes, defied the vigilance of the actor, who could make no other note upon him, save that his doublet was patched in three places, whilst at least half a dozen holes called for similar attention. Nokes again sank upon his seat, and called his scattered ideas to a close council. At length he was decided; heedless of personal danger—counting his life in such a cause as naught—he rose, determined to rush upon the rebels and secure them, when he found them—gone! More, the landlord knew nothing of them—they had paid their reckoning, and there his cares began and ended. Nokes, weighed down with the fatal secret, quitted the house for the theatre. He told the treason to the prompter, whose only remark was, that some people had strange dreams: he gave dark hints of the brooding evil to the manager, who heard them with an

incredulous face, uttering a delicate warning against strong drink.

Leaving Nokes in his perplexity, we beg leave to take the reader behind the scenes of 'The Duke's' on the first day of the long-promised glory—the play, with new dancers, new scenery, new machines, new music! The theatre swarmed with the 'best people' of the town. The king and the duke, with all the flower of the court, were in the house, and Sir William, suffused and dilated with the *mens divinior*, looked and walked expecting triumph, when an event occurred which menaced manager and author with shame and defeat. A beautiful young actress (wild horses shall not tear her name from us), charged with the most important part of the play, was not to be found; after a distracted search, it seemed certain that she had either committed suicide or an elopement. There were, however, some vague hopes of her life, as, on the previous day, she had been seen in full health, smiling and talking in St. James's Park. Quick or dead, she had left the author of the new play without a Princess, and where, or how, he was suddenly to provide himself, quite passed his wit. Sir William was aghast with disappointment, when Mrs. Davies ran laughing to the bard, and told him not to despair, for that a new actress, perfect in the part, had fallen upon them from the clouds. 'A pretty creature, who had brought rouge and patches to Mrs. Gibbs, vowed she could act the Princess to the life!' Sir William, vexed at what he deemed unnecessary humour at his affliction, was swinging away from the fair speaker, when he was fixed by Mrs. Gibbs herself, dragging rather than leading to the author a pretty, blushing girl, before introduced to the reader as—Peggy Simpson! On that eventful day, Peggy, with the consent of her mother, had taken the place of a young friend, suddenly fallen sick, and had brought the aforesaid stage illustrations to Mrs. Gibbs. As Sir William glanced at Peggy, his face on the instant cleared up; indeed, her look and demeanour were almost enough to mollify even that wild beast, a

dramatist in the ferocity of a first night. Peggy hung down her head, and the tears started to her eyes; she could have wished the stage to yawn and swallow her from the ordeal which her vivacity had provoked. 'How came it that she knew the part?' was a question asked by more than Sir William.

'She had helped Mr. Downes to copy the characters, and that of the Princess being the prettiest, she had, without knowing it, got it by heart!' Mr. Downes, coming up at the time, though astounded to meet Peggy, for he had known nothing of her friendly mission, corroborated her story as to the help of her pen; and, though somewhat confused at the accusing looks and significant gestures of Nokes and other of the gentlemen actors, ventured a favourable opinion of the girl's intelligence. 'At all events, 'tis worth the trial,' said Sir William; and, followed by Betterton, Mrs. Davies, Mrs. Gibbs, and a dozen others, he took Peggy into his room to hear her speak the part. This she did with so much grace and sweetness, that Sir William gave her into the hands of Mrs. Davies, who bore Peggy away in triumph to the tiring-room, where in due time she was habited right royally. As she looked in the glass, Peggy fairly believed in some enchantment; the world had changed about her, and she was no longer Peggy Simpson. Yes, there was a wish which proved her identity: she wished that her mother could see her; wished that—that another person was there to behold his Princess!

The indulgence of the audience being duly prayed for, Peggy appeared before her judges. Her very soul seemed to flutter at her lips when the applause burst upon her; the beating of her heart was truly painful, a raging thirst came suddenly upon her; she was now burning with fever, and now shaking with ague; objects whirled and danced around, she could distinguish no one face or form from among the crowd, but stood amazed, transfixed, blinded, by the din that rose about her. The author glared at the little Princess with unpitying eyes, and some two or three of the

actresses smiled, like statues, at her confusion. 'I told you so,' was said by more than one, 'I told you so.' Indeed, the condition of Peggy threatened to bear out the worst possible prophecy; for the applause had ceased for some seconds, and she still stood mute, trembling, and weeping; she endeavoured to speak, her lips moved, but no sound was audible. Then came another round of applause, when Peggy, by a wonderful effort—her gentle face and fragile figure glowed and towered with the clamour—found her voice, her self-possession, and, from that moment she commenced the part, which, scene after scene, she rendered more interesting and intelligent. When the play was ended, a thousand hands and voices declared her triumph.

'Tut! Mr. Betterton, it can't be. What, a raw schoolgirl become in three hours a finished actress!' Thus spoke a fair member of The Duke's,' an unbeliever who had not seen the new Princess. 'What can she know of the business of the stage?'

'Nothing. She knew not when to cross, or where to turn; nay, she suffered twenty admirable opportunities to escape without resorting to her pocket-handkerchief, and when she should have kept a regal measured pace, she more than once tripped like a milkmaid. Yet, after all, she knew more than the words; it was evident that she had steeped her spirit in the essence of the character; that she had for hours and days before *lived* the princess; and thus, though the girl was sadly out in the mechanism of acting, she showed a deep, intuitive sense of poetry and passion.' So judged Mr. Betterton, and we bow to his opinion. It was, moreover, very certain that Peggy had made other admirers, for no sooner was she off the stage than she was beset by a crowd of high gentlemen, young and old, who, by the liberal kindness of the manager, had the happy privilege of staring at the actress behind the scenes. She was fairly hemmed about by a host of flatterers; and she shrank, timid as a leveret, from their approach. One young gentleman was singularly pressing in his admiration. He was a tall, slim youth,

with one eternal smile at his mouth, meaning nothing; his upper lip bore, though yet in its infancy, a very promising moustache, and he spoke in a manner partaking both of a yawn and a lisp. He bowed his face close to the face of Peggy; and, turning a flower betwixt his thumb and finger, an exotic for which he had that day given forty shillings, proceeded with his sudden suit—'Nay, I vow, I protest, by all the gods—' He was protesting on, when, with a thought, the object of his vows was carried off! It was Manager Betterton himself, who had withdrawn Peggy from the dangerous accents of the young speaker. 'Child,' said the careful functionary, 'it is time to go home; I will see you there.'

Unobserved, as Betterton thought, he quitted the playhouse with his beautiful charge; he had placed her in a chair, and was walking trustily by its side, when, turning into Drury Lane, he was overtaken by three youths, who, with loud voices, and we fear with an oath or two, cried 'Stand!' It was a foggy November evening, and the links being seized and extinguished by the intruders, the chairman shouted, and Peggy began to scream, Betterton raved, and addressed himself to do battle with the assailants, who, it was plain, were determined upon bearing off the girl. The fight began and was about to conclude in favour of the thieves, when a sudden reinforcement turned the fortune of the day; two of Betterton's troupe had ignominiously taken to their heels; he, their valorous captain, was upon his back; his sword—for he had left the theatre in his stage dress—torn from his hand, and the principal of the ruffians grasping his throat; when who should come up but Nokes, who had resolved to watch Betterton, speedily followed by the young hair-lipped gentleman, breathing vengeance against the manager. The desperadoes were defeated and secured, but, oh! unlooked-for, happy event! Nokes leaped, in a paroxysm of loyalty and gladness, when he recognized in the three prisoners, the leash of traitors in the Roebuck! With glaring eyes, and a voice cracking

with earnestness, Nokes ran over the roll of their probable villainies, and concluded by screaming to all good men and true to hold fast the knaves, as Cromwellites—as murderers—as traitors to the king and to the state! Here Peggy, who had sat half dead with fright, shrieked; and, bursting from the chair, ran to the handsomest of the three prisoners, and—to the horror and consternation of many of the beholders—fell upon his neck, crying, sobbing, 'Oh, Stephen! Stephen! what have you done?'

It cannot be denied that the looks of the prisoners were most suspicious. She stood overwhelmed with shame and amazement. That Peggy, the Princess, should show such unequivocal interest for the chief traitor, only served to deepen the mystery. Nokes, though his heart began to soften, felt he had a firm duty to perform; he had also a vague feeling, should he have brought a great plot to light, of the possibility of a baronetcy. Thus, persisting in his charge, the culprits were forthwith taken to the roundhouse, which—the rumour reaching the theatre—was speedily filled with many of its noble visitors. The charge of Nokes being heard—and he gave his evidence with most provoking perspicacity—the prisoners were called upon to tell who and what they were.

The first who answered was Stephen Skein, son of John Skein, doublet-maker to his gracious majesty. He had visited the theatre that day; but with no evil designs against monarchy or the stability of the state. He recollected being at the Roebuck; recollected a conversation there; was not bound to criminate himself; would reserve what more he had to say for his trial.

Jeremy Midge, the second speaker, was apprentice to the father of Stephen Skein, and bosom friend of his young master; he had been to the play; remembered the Roebuck; had some talk there; would say no more at present.

Peter Bang, the last of the accused, was for taking a very high tone; he was a free-born Englishman, and

hated the French; he, however, would say no more at present; for his living, he got it how he could; there were many people who, for all their fine clothes, were in no better condition.

It was true that the conspirators, intent on mischief, had visited 'The Duke's;' it was not less certain that Peggy was the cause of the failure of the plot. Stephen was so astounded, so struck out of himself, by the appearance of his swectheart—for, in spite of the threats and frowns of his wealthy father, he still vowed to marry Peggy—that the high object of his patriotism had dissolved in mist. His companions were no less surprised and interested; and thus, when Peggy quitted the scene, they immediately left the gallery, and sought at the stage door a solution of the mystery. It was thence they tracked Betterton and his charge, and hence the fray and fatal recognition.

The examination of the prisoners being ended, and not the slightest proof of their murderous designs found upon them—the pocket of Stephen containing nothing more dangerous than three well-known letters written by Peggy—it required all the vehement loyalty of Nokes to keep a serious air upon the case. As, however, Peggy's correspondence had been found upon the head offender, she was called upon to answer for herself. 'What was her surname? Who were her parents? Where did they dwell?' These questions she readily answered, stating that her father had been a soldier, and was killed at the battle of Worcester, fighting on the king's side. The simplicity of her replies was, however, lost upon the querist, who, no doubt to wring a confession from the lover Stephen. threatened to commit Peggy as an accomplice—as, indeed, a person treasonous to the state. The threat produced the wished effect; no sooner was it uttered, than the young doublet-maker avowed his readiness to confess; let Mr. Nokes interrogate, and he, Stephen, would reply! All ears were opencd for the terrible disclosure, and Peggy, pale as a corse, the tears streaming down her face, clung to the arm of Betterton, though her eyes

were riveted upon Stephen. Nokes, with new dignity, proceeded with the tragedy.

'Did not the prisoner at the Roebuck say that when the king and court were at "The Duke's," he and his accomplices would go armed; and then, at a given signal, let fly among 'em!'

Stephen, with erect head and firm voice, replied, 'I did!' As he spoke, every face in the roundhouse looked astonishment and horror; the features of the apprentice grew deathly white, and even the cheeks of the high-souled Peter Bang waxed somewhat leaden. 'Miserable young man!' exclaimed one of the twenty courtiers who had come from the theatre, 'what could have tempted you to so wicked a deed?'

'The love of my country!' replied the undaunted Stephen.

'Old England for ever!' cried, or rather with some effort squeaked the apprentice.

'We are Englishmen, and will die for the rights of Englishmen!' fulmined the resolute Bang.

The nobleman was proceeding—'And with what weapons!'—when an officer, carrying a bag which he had found where the prisoners had sat in the gallery, entered the roundhouse. Now, there was evidence complete; doubtless the bag contained some missiles of diabolical invention—some devilish mischief which, if properly directed, would murder an army.

'Prisoner!'—the voice of the speaker faltered with a false pity for the youth—'is this your bag?'

'The bag is mine!'

Instantly the contents were shaken over the table, when there fell in all directions a shower of—of—the voice of every beholder shouted—'Peas!' Then ensued a moment's pause; and then the roof rang with laughter. Poor Nokes, distrusting his sense of sight and hearing, placed one of the deadly shots between his teeth, and then exclaimed, 'A cornchandler's plot!—Peas, by Jupiter!'

Still the offenders, by their own confession, stood charged with an attempt to violate the sacredness of

Majesty; this, however, they vigorously denied. No; they swore they had no designs against the State—they had no wish to overturn the Government; all they burned and yearned for was patriotically to trip up the French dancers. It was when 'Monsieur L'Abbé, Monsieur Ruel, Maria Gallia,' and others of whose names fame has proved forgetful—it was when they first appeared, that, in the nervous English of the conspirators, they were 'to let fly among 'em!'[1] Patriotism, like love, takes a thousand ingenious ways to develop itself; indeed, the history of thousands of statesmen shows it.—Caius Cassius was for Roman blood—Stephen Skein merely required a sprained French ankle: for the apprentice, he joined in the plot for the sake of good company; many a conspirator hath had no profounder reason for his meddling. For Peter Bang, his patriotism was, we grieve to say, alloyed by private feeling: it was true, like all youths of the seventeenth century, he of course had from his cradle a hatred of his natural enemies—the French; but his antipathy against the Gallic artists was heightened by early associations; he was wont a year or two before, to carry to the theatre the bundle of an English dancer, of one who, in the days of pure taste, was held the 'only jig-maker!'

We now approach the end of our little history. Stephen and his companions, after a suitable warning, were discharged; and Peggy, though dazzled by her success and tempted by a hundred siren voices, married

[1] We have culled this historical anecdote from a huge mass of neglected records. There is no doubt, however, that we have been anticipated in our knowledge of the peculiar nature of the conspiracy; and that the patriots of 1738, who, when a company of French dancers appeared at the Haymarket, strewed the boards with a storm of peas, were fully aware of the abortive plot at 'The Duke's!' Hitherto history has been silent upon it, but the idea is too brilliant to have visited more than one brain; the Haymarket conspirators were only poor copyists.—*See Victor's History of London and Dublin Theatres.*

the son of the rich old doublet-maker, the dignified tradesman being reconciled to the match by a message, ay, from the court; for it was discovered by Betterton that it was Peggy's father who had served in Mohun's regiment, and who had, moreover, lost his life defending a nobleman assailed by three of the enemy. Mohun lost no time in informing his lordship of the condition of Peggy and her mother—the girl was immediately portioned; old Skein, as we have shown, was softened by his lordship; and, in a few days, Mrs. Davies, Mrs. Gibbs, Mohun, Betterton, Nokes—yes, and Downes the prompter—danced at the wedding of the late 'Actress at "the Duke's!"'

JACQUES COCAST

THE HUNCHBACK PHILOSOPHER

'THANK God for my hunch!' cried Jacques Cocast, then eleven years old, escaped from the pitying hands of Martin Fleece, the miller, who, casting a compassionate glance at Cocast's unseemly load, exclaimed—

'Well, the saints have burthened thee enough—go, I wouldn't beat a hunchback.'

'Thank God for my hunch!' were the grateful words of the apple-stealing Jacques, and he followed his lighter-heeled companions, who, on the first alarm, had scampered safely off from the miller's orchard, leaving their ill-formed co-mate to the vengeance of the despoiled. The miller, as we have shown, was merciful, and Jacques Cocast, the hunchback, went his way unbruised.

Jacques Cocast grew up, the living plaything of the boys of the village. He was their drudge, their jest, their scapegoat. His good humour turned bitterness itself to merriment, and with at times the tears starting to his eyes, he would laugh them down, and without knowing it, play the practical philosopher.

'Out, ye imp of deformity!' cried Cocast's stepmother, at least once a day: whereupon Jacques, to the increasing ire of his father's wife, would merely cry—

'Thank God for my hunch!'

Left to himself, now spurned, and now at least endured by his growing companions, Jacques Cocast made a friend of his book, and found the exceeding reward of such friendship. He could read, write, and cypher to the shame of many of his seniors. Jacques Cocast's father took sudden pride in his own misshapen

flesh, and Cocast's wife stormed at her step-son with increasing vigour.

The notary wanted a clerk. All eyes were turned upon Jacques as the very lad for the office. The notary himself condescended to canvass the pretensions of Jacques to the dignity. Already Jacques felt himself installed, when a slim, fair-haired, pink-complexioned youth was preferred to Cocast, the notary's wife having pithily informed her obedient husband, that his house should be no dwelling-place for a hunchback.

Jacques Cocast sighed as he turned from the notary's door, and his heart beat heavily as he crawled to his paternal home. In two or three days, however, the hunchback smiled and laughed as before, and the clerkship was forgotten in sweet communings with his book.

Some four years passed, when oh—shame to the notary's wife, shame to the fair-haired youth—the faithless woman fled from the bosom of her husband, taking with her in her flight her husband's clerk! Great was the consternation throughout the village—loud and deep the revilings of every honest spouse. Jacques Cocast joined in no abuse, but with a fine charity for the inexperience of youth, with even a tenderness towards the sin of the unfaithful wife, and considering within himself the subtle powers of the tempter, he felt grateful for his escape, and breathed his gratitude in his wonted syllables—

'Thank God for my hunch!'

Jacques Cocast was now a painstaking, philosophic tailor; and from no higher elevation than his shopboard, could look down upon many of the varieties of human life. He was now twenty, and increasing years had only served to mellow his rich heart, and make him feel a lessening load upon his shoulders. Jacques would make one at all village holidays, led thereto by his own light-heartedness, and of late, furthermore urged to each festival by the blue eyes of Félicité, the baker's daughter.

Luckless Jacques Cocast! Fly the sweet perdition! You know not the falsehoods of those azure lights—

the venom of that pouting, pulpy lip; Félicité laughs with a witch's laugh at the love of the hunchback—whilst he, poor innocent, exalted, sublimated, by his passion, lives in an atmosphere of balm and sun, vaults like a grasshopper about the earth, and gives his heart and soul to the tyranny that rejoices him. Jacques Cocast knew not vanity. He would clothe himself in the humblest weed, and then think that the best wardrobe which drew to itself the least notice. Now was it otherwise. The eyes of Félicité had smiled upon the tailor, and Jacques Cocast should henceforth be the best and the most critical customer to Jacques Cocast. If Félicité had looked with favour on his body, he would take the hitherto despised article under his future care, and habit it worthy of her who had elected it as her own. As for his hump, that was gone, yea, vanished, melted in the sunlight of Félicité's eyes. With these rejoicing thoughts Jacques Cocast would array himself as the finest caterpillar; his vestments now barred, and spotted, and burnished with a hundred hues. And as he basked in the smiles of Félicité, the baker's wicked daughter would laugh in her hollow heart, and the folks of the village would confidently clap their finger to their noses, and wink towards the tailor.

For a month or more was Jacques Cocast the blissful Adam of this fool's paradise. For a full month did he breathe Elysium. At length the eyes of Jacques Cocast were opened, and he saw his forlornness. It was the day of a *ducasse*. In the pride of his heart, and in all the glory of his trade, did the hunchback array himself to dance with Félicité, the baker's daughter. She had of late been so loving, so complying, so tender! The next dance might be at their own wedding. At all events, how they would dance on the coming Sunday. He, the hunchback, buoyed by his loving heart, would foot it so lightly that not a blade of grass should bend beneath him—not a dewdrop be scattered by his mercurial toe.

The dancers are assembled. The fiddles sound. Jacques Cocast, in all the glory of a new suit, burning

like a peacock in a conflict of colours, and in the triumph of a gladdened soul, advances to lead out Félicité, the baker's daughter. Already he has laid his hand upon her hand, when a gigantic thumb and finger with a vice-like power gripes the nose of Jacques Cocast, and whirls him from his partner. A laugh that drowns the fiddles *bursts* from the merry-makers. Jacques Cocast, with lightning in his eyes, and all the blood in his body rushing to his nose, looks for his assailant.

Hercule Grossetête, a rival of six feet, French measure, with fierce eyes, and parrot nose, glaring and protruding from raven whiskers, with arms a-kimbo, stands before the tailor. Nevertheless, the soul of Jacques Cocast is mighty, and he is meditating how he may best spring upon the giant, and tear his iron heart from his body, when—oh, ye daughters of Eve! oh, ye rosy wickednesses, ye honied poisons! Félicité, the baker's daughter, advanced to Hercule, and curtseying, and putting her hand in his—in his hand, yet warm from the outraged nose of her doting lover—signified that she was ready to dance, that she had looked with eyes of favour on the punishment of the tailor. Then sank the heart of Jacques Cocast. He quitted the scene of his past happiness, and in an agony of despair wandered, a very lunatic.

Foolish Jacques Cocast! Who would pity the despair of a hunchback? Who compassionate a love-broken heart, if accompanied by overladen shoulders? What is a beautiful sentiment with a straightbacked, comely man, is a thing for a jest, an excellent joke, for a hunchback. And so, Jacques Cocast, go home. Sleep not in the fields at night. Lie not under the window of the baker's daughter, and waste not away, until, as you complain, your head has grown too little for your hat, but up, man, and to your comfortable abode. Shave yourself, change your linen, leap upon your shop-board, thread your needle, heat your goose, and defy love! A friendly genius whispered some such advice to Jacques Cocast, for ere a month had

passed, the tailor has once more taken to his sober attire, was seated smiling at his work, and if a thought of the cruel baker's daughter would sometimes intrude, he would banish the unwelcome guest by the very vehemence of stitching.

Months passed away, and the time of drawing for the conscription arrived. Mothers looked anxious, plighted maidens would sigh frequently, and look with tender gaze upon their future husbands, the young men would laugh, laugh louder than was their wont, to hush the secret care that preyed upon them. But what was the conscription, with the banishment, the danger, the wounds, and death combined in the word, to Jacques Cocast? He was a hunchback. His shoulders were exempted by nature from a knapsack. He was not a comely morsel for glory; he was not worthy of the powder and shot bestowed upon prettier men. No, he was secure in his deformity; his heart started not at the muttering of the beaten sheepskin. Hence Jacques Cocast without one throb, save for the fate of some old acquaintance, might linger about the town-hall of the arrondissement, and learn the fortune of his fellow-villagers.

The day of drawing came. There was the shriek of triumph as one sprang into his mother's arms—as his sister clung about his neck, as his plighted wife kissed him—and *now* their wedding day was certain—there were bursts of joy and tears of happiness as the exempt sprang from the crowd, and there were cries of despair, and sobbing as among breaking hearts, as the new conscripts told the fate that tore them from their homes.

'Thank God for my hunch!' cried Jacques Cocast, twenty times, as he saw the wretchedness of the conscript soldier.

Among those drawn to wear future laurels was Hercule Grossetête. He looked savage as a snubbed ogre: and the baker's beautiful daughter hung upon his arm, and was crying her heart out, and vowing between her sobs that, for the sake of her dear Hercule,

she would try to live and die a maid: and Hercule with his fancy listening to the whistling bullets, smiled vacantly on the magnanimity of Félicité, and bade heaven help her in all her trials.

And did the heart of Jacques Cocast rejoice at this? By no means; he felt no triumph at the calamity of Grossetête, no pleasure at the grief of his fair, false baker's daughter; but with a gush of gratitude, he exclaimed,

'Thank God for my hunch!'

Hercule Grossetête went to the war. Fortune, that had heaped such obloquy upon the shoulders of Cocast, had fitted Grossetête for the dignity of a grenadier. He quitted the village, left the baker's daughter, and was soon marching and, perhaps, day-dreaming of pillage and epaulettes. We know not what struggles Félicité endured to keep her pledge to Hercule; they must have been severe and manifold; for it was at least six months after the departure of her grenadier that she wedded the son of the village grocer: the grocer's father opportunely dying and leaving his stock and business to his only son. All the world—that is, all the village—believed in the conjugal bliss of the grocer and his wife; Pierre Chandelles was so meek, so gentle a soul, any woman must be happy with him.

Again, Félicité was always the sweetest-tempered girl: there had been curious tales of her sudden passion, but such tales had been trumped up by the ugliest girls of the village.

Three months had passed since Pierre and Félicité were one; and Jacques Cocast (for in the magnanimity of his soul he did not withdraw his custom from Pierre on account of his wife; besides, Pierre's was the only shop in the village) modestly tapped a sou on Pierre's counter, it being the intention of the tailor to dispense that coin in beeswax. Suddenly there was a noise within. Jacques recognised the voice of Félicité, albeit he had never heard it at so high a pitch. Another minute, and Pierre rushes into the shop followed by

his wife, who, heedless of the wants of a customer, heedless of the cries of her husband, demolished an earthen pipkin, unluckily in her hand, upon her lord and sovereign's head. No sheep ever bled with more meekness than did Pierre Chandelles the grocer.

'What do you want?' asked Pierre, with still a vigilant eye to business.

'I'll call again when your wounds are dressed,' said Jacques Cocast; 'in the meantime, thank God for my hunch!'

Years went on, and Jacques Cocast gathered about him the small comforts of the world, and keeping the spirit of his youth, was blithe as a bird.

One autumn evening, wandering a mile or two on the road from the village, and thinking, he knew not upon what, Jacques Cocast was suddenly startled in his reflections by a loud voice—

'For the love of the saints, if you have it, give me a pinch of snuff.'

The prayer proceeded from a blind soldier, seated on a tree felled near the roadside.

'With all my heart,' cried Cocast; 'here, empty my box.'

'Alas, good sir!' cried the soldier, 'look at me again!'

Cocast looked, and saw that the man had lost both his arms.

'You must, indeed, *give* me the snuff,' said the soldier.

'With all my heart, I say again,' cried Cocast, and with the most delicate care he supplied the nostrils of the mutilated veteran. 'Good heavens!' suddenly exclaimed Cocast, 'why you are Hercule Grossetête!'

'I am,' answered the soldier, 'and what have you to say to that?'

'What!' Jacques Cocast, looking at the eyeless, armless victim of glory, could only say,

'*Thank God for my hunch!*'

Almost all men have a hunch of some kind. Let them, with Jacques Cocast, thank God for it.

BARON VON BOOTS

A TALE OF 'BLOOD'

CHAPTER I

Baron Valhallah Von Boots was descended from the Sea Kings! One colonel of Black Hussars, who, in an incautious moment, had smiled a doubt of the glorifying fact, sleeps beneath Silesian turf, sent thither by the Baron's sword; and a French captain of Dragoons coughing, as the baron supposed, sarcastically at a Scandinavian ancestor of the first century, was incurably maimed in the left arm by the sabre of Von Boots! The wounded man is now alive in Paris, and ready to depose in his person to the sensitiveness and skilful valour of the Baron, above all men fiercely proud of the inestimable treasures inherited of an ancient and illustrious race. 'I have no gold,' the Baron would exclaim smiling, as it appeared, the very deepest satisfaction at his condition, 'I have no gold, but—' and here the Baron would fling up one hand to the heavens, and, with the other, remove his hat, should it be there, from his capacious forehead; and as though gazing on his grandfather's grandfathers tippling mead in the halls of Odin, would add, in a tone of thunder, 'but—but I have de blood!'

High blood, like the finest wine, may be kept so long that it shall entirely lose its flavour; and though it may obtain an affectation of respect for its antiquity, yet circumstances may combine to make men turn from it, allowing it to be very 'curious,' but selecting that of a less illustrious quality. Hence, the last of an old family may be like the last bottle of a famous vintage—a thing to talk of, not to use. We remember an illustration.

'You talk of old wine, gentlemen,' cried Mr. Dovesheart, a bankruptcy attorney, to a select circle—we were about to write knot—of professional friends; 'why, upon my life, and as I'm a Christian, I have in my cellar port wine a hundred and seventeen years old!'—'Is it possible?'—'Mind, it 's only one bottle, the last bottle. Here, John, bring up that wine, bring it up: and now, gentlemen, since you talk of old wine, you shall have a *bonne bouche*.'—'My dear Dovesheart, you won't drink it?'—'Why not? why not?'—'Quite gone with age,' observes Costs, confidently, to his neighbour Pinch, who replies, 'Worse than physic, of course.'—'D——d if I spoil *my* mouth with it,' whispers the conscientious Gorge; whilst others of the party, saying nothing, only endeavoured not to make wry mouths.—'Here it is!' cries the hospitable Dovesheart. 'The corkscrew, John.'—'The corkscrew!' exclaims Flay, 'surely, surely, you'll never draw it: a thousand pities—such a curious thing!'—'Pooh! pooh!' answers Dovesheart, 'it must be drunk some day, and, on an occasion like this, why, there'll just be a taste a piece, and—' 'No, no, really your kindness goes too far,' says Rubygill; 'consider, one hundred and seventeen years old!—so rare a thing!—don't draw it for us. I'm sure no gentleman here requires——' and Rubygill looks around him, and every guest cries 'No, no,' shocked at the very proposal of the sacrifice. At length, amidst words and looks of entreaty, Dovesheart lays down the corkscrew, a burst of applause attending the merciful act. 'Well, it 's very odd!' says the host, shaking his head at the ancient port, 'very strange—but to tell you the truth—I have had that bottle up at least a dozen times, and just, as now, nobody would ever suffer me to draw the cork. John, take the bottle to the cellar.'

Baron Von Boots was the last bottle of his race; many and many a time had he found his way up to the drawing-room, had been praised as a person of the most ancient stock, had heard the highest eulogies of his name, had been gazed at, smiled upon, by the

brightest eyes; and yet, yet was the Baron the last bachelor of his line, the sole remaining bottle of the vintage of Von Boots! However, even doomed to the dark and comfortless bin of celibacy, the Baron had his consolation—'I have not de money,' he would always cry, 'but I have de blood.' 'Not a soul will give twopence-halfpenny for me—nay, will even wet his lips with me,' cries Dovesheart's port; 'but, hurrah! I am a hundred and seventeen years old!'

The Baron Von Boots had, in happy season, entered the family circle of the Neatskins. The true friend is tried by affliction. Philip Neatskin was in sorrow; and Von Boots proved himself a friend indeed. Death was gradually withdrawing Mrs. Neatskin, that best of women, as her husband vehemently called her, from a vain and wicked world, when the Baron stepped in to support the good man beneath the shock, which, truth to say, he had long awaited with commendable philosophy; sustained and strengthened by the Baron, Neatskin deemed himself invulnerable. To be sure, custom does much to harden men; and as Mrs. Neatskin had, every day and night for a whole ten years, threatened to depart from this earth, it is not so great a matter of surprise that her husband became at length comparatively unmoved by the alarming menace.

'It is very good of you, Baron—very kind, indeed, to come and sit with one; for, whilst things are as they are, I must be wretched company.'

'Not at all—by no means—delightful!' said the Baron to Philip Neatskin.

'Ha, Baron! it 's friendly in you to flatter—friendly, and like yourself; but, at the same time, with Mrs. Neatskin getting weaker and weaker——'

'Poor woman!' said Von Boots: 'and so long too!'

'For ten years and upwards,' observed Neatskin, 'and every day weaker and weaker.'

'She must have been very strong at first,' said Von Boots.

'A fine woman in her time, Baron,' remarked her husband; 'but she 's disappointed all the doctors.'

'Doetors!' cried Von Boots, and his moustache curled like a worm with content; 'doetors! dey know nothing about it.'

'You are right, Baron!' exclaimed Neatskin, with some animation, 'd——l a bit!'

'It is all as de luck happen,' said Von Boots.

'Just so,' rejoined Neatskin.

Still and lovely was the summer evening on which Neatskin and his friend, sitting in a green arbour, thus discoursed of death and fate. Pipes and best tobacco, brandy, and that better fluid, water, eold as chastity, from a neighbouring fountain, lay before them. The blackbird whistled as the Baron filled.

We envy not the feelings of that man who could sit in that bower, planted in that orchard, with such sights and sounds about him, yet remain unmoved. Happy are we to say, Von Boots was not that image; for, filling his tumbler with a most scrupulous hand, the water boasting no drop above the brandy, whilst the glorious sun flamed in the west, and the blackbird sent his music in mellow gushes from an apple-tree, the Baron emptied his glass adown his throat, and waving his hand about him, he placed it upon his heart, saying, 'Dis—dis is true boetry.'

'It is, Baron; here's to you,' and Neatskin took a draught.

'Dis is,' cried Von Boots, his hand again upon the brandy, 'dis is dat elevation of de spirit, which, my dear friend, in all de calamities of dis life, is true philosophy.'

'Not a doubt of it,' answered Neatskin, and he prepared to mix. 'Brandy-and-water, my dear Baron, is like marriage; to be palatable, parties should be equal. Nothing can be better,' pronounced Neatskin, sipping at his glass. 'What say you to a game?' and, with the question, Neatskin pulled out a drawer, and took thence his darling cards and cribbage-board.

'Anyting, my friend,' answered the benevolent Baron, 'anyting to ease your wounded soul. Since de wife

of your bosom is all but torn from you—it 's your deal —since de partner of your joys——'

'Ha! it 's kind of you, Baron, at such a time too—in the hour of affliction—cut to me,' said Neatskin, who proceeded with his game, mingling his domestic cares with his cares of crib. He had already been twice victor, and was preparing for further conquest, when Dolly ran into the orchard, and, crying and wringing her hands, informed her master that his wife was unaffectedly dying. Neatskin paused in his deal, and, with an incredulous eye, challenged the countenance of Dolly. It was plain that the good man's feelings had before been trifled with. 'Dying, Dolly?'

'Really and truly sir,—all too true now, sir—the doctor says you *must* come, sir,' exclaimed Dolly.

'I'll come instantly—directly,' said Neatskin, and he played his last card, pegged his hand, and, distracted by his emotion, made the cards, and proceeded to deal again.

'Indeed, sir,' cried Dolly, 'mistress is very bad, indeed.'

'Poor soul! Fifteen two—say I am—and six are thirty-one. The doctor's with her, I hope?' asked Neatskin.

'The doctor sent me, sir, and told me to say, sir, if you wished to see dear mistress alive—the doctor, sir——' and Dolly paused.

'He's a very clever man—one for his heels,' muttered Neatskin.

'But mistress, sir!' cried Dolly; 'she 's at the very brink of the grave.' And Dolly ran into the house.

'Spades are trumps,' said the Baron.

'The very thing I want,' cried Neatskin. 'Eh? the girl 's gone! Make haste, my dear Baron, for she 's an excellent woman. Twenty years we have been together, and—and—that will spoil your crib, I think; twenty years we have been one, and—fifteen two.'

'Oh, sir! oh, sir!' shrieked Dolly, returning—'too late, sir!—too late!'

'Too late! What do you mean?' asked the Baron, for Neatskin was dumb. 'What do you mean? Too late?' And the Baron played.

'Gone, sir! You wouldn't come; and now, now—' and Dolly sobbed—'now quite gone.'

'What!' cried Von Boots, 'and is your mistress dead?'

'Dead,' answered Dolly.

As she spoke, Neatskin played his last card.

'Dead,' repeated Dolly.

'Good for one hole,' cried Neatskin, and, pushing the cards from him, he caught the eye of the Baron. He said, in a broken voice, 'the last game to me,' and took out his handkerchief.

Baron Von Boots, a deep observer of the human heart, attempted not to stem a tide of sudden woe. Hence, he suffered his friend to sit with the napkin to his eyes, and in silence stretched his right hand to the brandy. The blackbird was silent; all nature seemed in a moment hushed, when the splashing of the liquor from the bottle to the glass doubtless struck upon the consciousness of Neatskin; for he looked up, and, faintly smiling on the Baron, held forth his hand to grasp his comforter. Von Boots, either bewildered by the sudden calamity, or mistaking the yearnings of his host, gave him the brandy-and-water, which Neatskin, affably passing the error of his friend, instantly swallowed.

'She was an excellent woman,' said Neatskin; 'but we must all go!'

'Dat is philosophy,' said Von Boots.

'An excellent woman, and—gone at last! Let me see—my poor head!—let me see—oh, I remember. Ha! an excellent woman. The first game of the second rubber to me.'

CHAPTER II

We have endcavoured to show the conjugal happiness of Neatskin by an incident rather than by discourse. A mutual indifference of some years' cultivation had prepared him to support his sorrow like a man; hence, in a few months, two at most, he had regained his old tranquillity, and, with it, a new zest for the pleasures of this frail and uncertain being. In a word, Philip Neatskin contemplated a second marriage!

'Baron Von Boots,'—it was then Philip consulted that sagacious oracle—'what may you call the prime of life?'

The Baron wisely answered: 'When I was twoscore, I called de prime of life forty—when twoscore ten, fifty; and, in another month, I shall be determined dat there is no prime of life till fifty-eight.'

'Exactly, Baron: I am in the prime,' said Neatskin.

'Every gentleman may take his prime as he shall think fit: for myself I never was so prime as now. Mr. Neatskin,' and the Baron looked more than usually grave, 'I shall make you my friend.' There was a pause, which the Baron employed in ringing either end of his moustache around his forefinger; the operation finished, Von Boots, looking dead at Neatskin, said, 'I am in love!'

Neatskin laughed, rubbed his hands, drew close to Von Boots, and patting him upon the shoulder, cried, 'Bravo, Baron! And is the lady rich?'

'She could buy a synagogue,' answered Von Boots.

'And you agree with one another—you accord—your sentiments harmonize?' asked Neatskin.

'Nothing could be better,' responded the Baron. 'You see, as for myself—I want de money, and, for de lady, she wants de blood.'

'Blood! blood! Baron Von Boots!' exclaimed Neatskin.

'My fortune is in my veins,' said the Baron; 'de

fortune of de lady is in de bank. We can accommodate—ha, ha! we can accommodate.'

'To be sure—I understand. And you really have hopes that your goddess will——'

'Hopes! Am I not Baron Valhallah Von Boots? You shall be my friend—you shall lend me one, two, or tree hundred pound to court de lady.'

A shadow fell upon Neatskin's face; however, it passed in a moment, and taking the Baron's hand, he assured Von Boots that, for a poor hundred pounds, he should not miss a woman who could buy a synagogue. The Baron, with an ursine hug, acknowledged the favour; at the same time intimating, that in love, as in war, a ready supply often insures success. Neatskin allowed the wisdom, for he straightway handed the cash to Von Boots.

Mrs. Agatha Mouser was left, at the age of forty-two, the disconsolate widow of an indefatigable money-broker; the poor man had, in the pursuit of wealth, taken great pains to damn himself; and, at threescore-and-five, died with the sweet consolation of leaving his partner the richest Niobe in England. Her beauty, and, perhaps, her gold, had excited very public attention; and there was scarcely an unappropriated gentleman with a great taste for a fortune, but with little hope of inheriting or earning one, who had not, at some time, flattering thoughts of Mrs. Agatha Mouser. Among these aspiring knights the Baron Von Boots was the boldest, and, if we take his own unbiassed opinion, the best. Rumours touching the humility of the lady's origin, gave great hopes to the Baron. 'With all dat gold,' he would cry, 'she must want the blood.' And so assured was he of the pressing condition of the widow, that, with his usual benevolence where good was to be done, Von Boots did not long hesitate as to the time and manner of doing it. With a third of the borrowed hundred pounds most tastefully laid out upon his person, the Baron Von Boots strode to the dwelling of the widow. As he stood at the threshold, victory seemed perched upon his new beaver. To

knock at the door was little less than a summons to surrender.

'Von Boots—Baron Valhallah Von Boots,' said the possessor of that name and dignity, handing his card to the servant, who, bowing the very lowest acknowledgment of the combined greatness, bore the important document to his mistress, at the time presiding at her levée of passionate adorers. At least half-a-dozen amorous swains offered their morning sacrifice to the golden goddess of their idolatry. Baron Valhallah Von Boots came, the seventh worshipper!

The widow, with an urbanity of the very highest order, commanded John to show the Baron up.

Reader, if perchance thou hast been a generalissimo—for, indeed, we write to all classes—and hast, with colours flying, trumpets blowing, drums beating, marched to the gates of a conquered city, where, bareheaded, bare-footed, and, it may be, in token of humility, with halters round their necks, the pallid burghers have knelt, presenting thee with the keys of the public treasury, making thee master of wealth incalculable—if, in thy diversified life, thou hast ever had this green and golden spot, thou must remember the beating of thy heart, the flushing of thy cheek, the dilation of all thy little anatomy to something vast, Titanic! Such was the feeling—such the sweet inflation of Von Boots. How airily he mounted the staircase! A spider, crawling on the carpet, came beneath the left toe of the Baron, yet felt him not; but, in that moment, Von Boots could have danced upon an unbroken cobweb.

Another instant, and Baron Boots found himself in the glorious presence of Mrs. Agatha Mouser. He bowed, and then gazed at the widow with that deep possessing devotion that a miser bestows upon a money-chest. Again the Baron bowed, put his hand to his heart, smiled, showed his teeth, and gazed complacently around him. In the opinion of Von Boots—the victory was won.

Mrs. Mouser had the deepest respect for a Baron in

the abstract, but—we can only account for it on the old score of female fickleness—she had little veneration for Von Boots in the concrete. Mrs. Mouser knew full well for what she was pursued; she was a shrewd woman, and, at the school where she had received her humble education, it would appear that great pains had been taken with her arithmetic; if such were not the case, it was then very evident that she had great natural genius for numbers. Mrs. Mouser, at a single glance at the wide, smiling mouth of the Baron, saw in him another candidate for her fortune, and, since they were not to be divided—herself. This she saw but would not see. Hence, as if awaiting the business of the Baron, she observed, glancing at her visitors, 'All my friends.'

A common man would have stood abashed at so cool an invitation to speak of burning love before half-a-dozen rival witnesses—but not Von Boots. He could not permit himself to waver in his first conviction of assured conquest; and, therefore, receiving the words of the widow as a general, yet courteous introduction, he made up to the gentlemen, and vehemently shaking the hand of every one of the six, declared most cordially that 'Mrs. Mouser's friends were his friends.'

'Sir, you do me honour,' said Mrs. Mouser, 'and might I be favoured with a knowledge of your business, I—'

Then Baron Von Boots, strong in his blood, supported by the consciousness of the widow's wants, together with his own conviction that he, of all men, by the nobility current in his veins, could best supply them, cast a look at Mrs. Mouser, a look intended to convey his business. Mrs. Mouser, wilfully insensible to such an easy mode of communication, was again about to urge Von Boots to speak, when one of the six young gentlemen, with a laughing face, tripped by the widow, whispering something as he passed, at which the lady smiled, and then looked complacently upon the Baron, who smiled back the courtesy with thankful interest.

'I am afraid, Baron Von Boots,' said Mrs. Mouser, in her softest voice, 'I am much afraid that you are a little late.'

The Baron had the politest way of expressing a dissent. He lowered his shoulders, flung back his hands, and grinning down upon the carpet, shook his head with a most eloquent motion.

'I—I am afraid you are,' repeated Mrs. Mouser.

Von Boots suddenly divining the cause of hindrance —conceiving the lady alluded to a previous engagement with one or more of the six unfortunate gentlemen whose hands he had grasped, raised his head, and whilst sparkles of flame broke from his eyes, and his moustaches seemed to work like leeches sucking blood, glared at the full half-dozen. The gentlemen, huddling together, now stared, now tittered, and now ventured to laugh outright. Von Boots was the politest of men; he, too, smiled and laughed; but there was deep tragedy meant in his merriment. The hyena laughs.

'Pray, Baron, from whom do you come?' asked Mrs. Mouser.

Von Boots, full of his blood, bursting with a sense of his antiquity, triumphing in the assurance of his marketable greatness, gave a flourish of his cane, and, bringing the end of it perpendicularly down upon the carpet, made answer, 'From de Sea Kings.'

Mrs. Mouser, though not a very agile person, fairly jumped at the announcement. The Baron saw, and glowed with satisfaction at her astonishment. He repeated the astounding intelligence, 'From de Sea Kings!'

'I should say,' remarked one of the gentlemen to his friends, 'cabin-boy to Noah.'

At this the young men laughed, and the obliging Von Boots gave another chuckle.

'Ha! Baron, this visit is very flattering,' said the widow. 'You are very kind, but I fear my dancing days are over.'

Von Boots paused to consider; there was some hidden meaning in the speech of the widow. 'Dancing

days!' It was no matter—he must say something. 'Ha! Madam,' cried the courteous Baron, 'if you cannot dance, you—you,' and here the Baron smiled as he spoke, 'you can love a little?'

'And, pray—ha! ha! well this is comical—pray, Baron,' said the widow, 'do you teach love?'

Von Boots spread all his right hand over his heart, pressed that valuable very hard, and answered seriously, 'I do.'

'In how many lessons?' inquired one of the gentlemen.

'And at how much a quarter?' asked another, a laugh following each query, and Boots benevolently joining in it.

'Teach love as well as dancing!' cried Mrs. Mouser: 'well, I declare, Baron, you are an accomplished person.' 'Dancing! Teach dancing, Madam—oh! ha! Dat gentleman did tell you dat I—ha! ha!' and the Baron laughed hoarsely, a feeling of vengeance thickening his voice as he looked threatening, first at the unfortunate informant who had, out of pure wit, whispered the false intelligence to Mrs. Mouser, and next at the remaining five, who had joined in the exquisite joke. 'I have taught gentlemen to dance,' said Von Boots.

'Where?' asked the innocent widow.

'Where ball and powder made de music,' answered the smiling Baron; and, in two minutes after the declaration, the widow found herself alone with the descendant of the Sea Kings. 'And now, Madam,' cried Von Boots, seizing the advantage, 'let us understand one another.'

'I shall be very happy, sir; and, if you please,' said the widow, 'as speedily as possible.'

'I have not, Madam,' said Von Boots, with a frankness well worthy of imitation by persons in his condition, 'I have not of my own one guinea.'

'I deeply regret your misfortune, sir,' cried the widow, with a motion of her hand towards her pocket, for, in those days, the female pocket was not exploded.

'You have tens of thousands!' exclaimed Von Boots. 'Still, Madam, you want what I am come to offer.'

'I want nothing, sir—nothing that'—and Mrs. Mouser moved towards the bell, but was seized by the martial, yet tender arm, of the Baron.

'You have de gold, Madam—de gold,' and Von Boots spoke as though he spoke of something offensive; 'but I—I,' he cried, raising his voice, and falling upon his knee, 'I have de blood!'

CHAPTER III

The Widow Mouser, with strange perversity or stranger ignorance, would or could not perceive the possibility of any connexion between her funded guineas and the 'ruddy drops' that visited the heart of Von Boots. In her home-spun opinion, gold could not be ennobled—a guinea carried with it innate nobility; with her, Plutus was beyond the gifts of Heralds' College. Hence, when the Baron Valhallah Von Boots, descendant of the Sea Kings, spoke of his blood, he conveyed to the sense of Mrs. Mouser nothing more than a barren truism: he might as well have proclaimed himself the possessor of two arms and the same number of legs, in the expectation of being embraced as a prodigy. All men, in the belief of Mrs. Mouser, had blood, and, if she had any choice in the quality of the 'wine of life,' it was certainly in favour of a more recent vintage than that flowing in the veins of Von Boots. She therefore received the declaration of the Baron with the most placid insensibility, happily lost upon Von Boots, who was too much rapt by a sense of his own importance to perceive the defects of others. He had received from fate unpurchasable glory; he carried in his pulse a treasure not to be equalled by the wealth of mines, or by the riches of the deep; of far greater worth than gold, costlier far than oriental

pearls; and yet, for the simple consideration of bed, board, and lodging on a handsome scale, the said small advantages solemnly assured to him by a priest, he had persuaded himself to offer a participation of his greatness to—yes, the daughter of a trunk-maker, and widow of a dirty money-changer. Was it possible, then, that the Baron Von Boots could dream of a refusal;—even in the vagaries that enter the brains of sleeping men, could he imagine a repulse? When he fell at the feet of Mrs. Mouser, he knelt only to rise a conqueror!

Mrs. Agatha Mouser—the first slight tremor past—withstood the passionate fervour of Von Boots with all the coolness of a thrice-wooed widow. The Baron gazed with a keen, admiring, and yet languishing expression—casting a look upon the lady like that thrown by a schoolboy through the window of a cake-shop—a look of love, and yet a look devouring. The widow was about to speak, when, catching the eye of Von Boots, she burst into a vehement laugh. The Baron felt the blood tingle in his cheek as he gazed upon the open mouth—'with all its pearls complete'—of the merry Agatha. She is evidently a mirthful, volatile creature, thought Von Boots, and with the thought he called up a look of deeper meaning, of such earnest significance that the widow became upon the instant serious. With scorn at her lip, and anger in her eyes, she tore her hand from the melting grasp of her lover, putting it to the unbiassed opinion of the Baron Valhallah Von Boots to answer this searching query—'Is the man mad, or is he but a fool?'

A mine sprung from beneath the knees of Von Boots could not have made him jump from the carpet as he jumped at the question of the widow. What he thought to speak—what he thought to do—or whether, indeed, in the uproar of his feelings, in the astonishment that paralysed him, he was capable of any thought whatever, we feel it to be a most difficult and delicate matter to decide. However, from the known character of the Baron, we may venture to assert that he would

have said or done something very terrible, had not his bosom friend, and most intimate creditor, Philip Neatskin, at that moment entered the room !

That that Spartan boy should have cracked hazel-nuts, whilst the fox was dining off his viscera, we hold to be a very poor instance of the triumph of mere will over physical agony, compared to the awful composure acted by the Baron Von Boots on the appearance of his friend ; for the demon Rage, begotten by despised love, was tearing into little pieces the rejected heart of Von Boots. Cupid, more cruel, as more cunning than ten foxes, struck at his liver, and yet, to crown him, ye stoics ! the Baron smiled, and waved his hand most courteously to the new comer.

'Eh ! what 's the matter ? ' cried Neatskin, passing the Baron, and, full of the tenderest concern, making up to the widow ; who no sooner saw a third party enter the room, than she let fall at least two tears. 'Agatha, what 's the matter ? ' inquired Neatskin, and the words like red-hot needles entered the heart of Von Boots. Neatskin, his friend and creditor, was his rival ! The monster jealousy may have green eyes, but sure we are it has a black face ; Von Boots, with the sudden passion, was black as Nox !

'These impertinences must be ended,' said Mrs. Mouser. 'Can I have no rest until I take shelter in a church ? '

'Boots,' said Neatskin, shortly ; and the Baron firing at the ignominious abbreviation, and marching up to the clipper of his name, his bosom dilating like the crop of a pouter pigeon, the descendant of the Sea Kings thundered—'Baron Valhallah Von Boots, at your service.'

'What is all this ? ' asked Neatskin, in a tone that forcibly brought to the recollection of the Baron his late loan of a hundred pounds. Neatskin spoke not so much like a rival as a creditor. 'What is all this ? ' he repeated.

'I tink, Mr. Neatskin,' answered the Baron, with grim politeness, 'I have already told you.'

'Why, you never meant that this was the lady, who—who—' and Neatskin stammered.

'I have de blood,' said Von Boots.

'Blood—a fiddlestick for your blood! You must please to remember, Mr. Baron, that I have pretensions here, and, moreover, remember that—'

'Pardon me,' said the Baron, with real politeness, his heart thumping at his waistcoat, and his eyes burning like glowworms, 'I tink I know what you would say—I do remember—I shall not forget;' and, with these words, significantly spoken, the Baron looked at his new beaver and his ruffles, purchased by the money borrowed of his rival. 'I shall not forget, Mr. Neatskin,' repeated the Baron, with the dignity of a true gentleman, 'and you will please to remember that whatever you have to say to dat lady, I shall be found to have de blood.' With the very best bow of which the Baron was capable, he then turned from the room, and sought his lonely lodging. The Baron sank in his one rush-bottomed chair, and, though at the ripe age of fifty-eight, felt that he could weep like a child. He dashed down his new beaver, and springing up, jumped upon it—his right-hand nails were fixed in his left ruffles and threatened instant dilaceration, when a late prudence—it might have interfered to save the damaged hat—withheld the Baron's arm. To crush a beaver that 'should be worn in its newest gloss,' to rend Brussels lace, was not the readiest way to pay for either article. Neatskin was his rival—his insulting rival—as such must answer him. Neatskin was his creditor—his contemptuous creditor; as such the Baron must answer *him*. It was easy for Von Boots to send a challenge—not so easy to send a hundred pounds! And with this thought, a sense of humiliating obligation steeped the Baron in a cold sweat. Again, with malignant eye, he glanced at the unoffending hat; again, with uncertain fingers, played among the threads of his left ruffle. What was to be done? The laws of honour, the custom of society, would not permit

him to challenge his creditor. Where was he to obtain seven-and-thirty pounds, for so much had he already expended out of the fatal hundred ? Miserable wretch ! Was there no rich helpless man that he could rob ? No shopkeeper that he could cheat out of goods to that amount—nobody upon whom he could even commit a forgery for the sum, that he might triumphantly return the money to his loathsome rival, and so receive the satisfaction of a gentleman ? Such, in the hurricane of his feelings, were the wild, fitful thoughts of the Baron Von Boots. How he writhed in his new cambric shirt, bought with the damning gold of Neatskin ! The shirt of Nessus—the truth of the allegory for the first time flashed across the Baron's mind—was a shirt not paid for. He stamped his foot upon the floor, mad with his wounded honour ; again he stamped, and was a third time about to smite the uncarpeted deal boards, when he was surprised by the thin sharp voice of his landlady outside the door, brought there by the summons, inquiring, ' if he wanted anything ? ' ' Nothing —nothing at all,' answered the Baron with vivacity, and jumping up, he ran down stairs, and, standing in the street, looked above, below, about him, for seven-and-thirty pounds.

Wretched Baron Valhallah Von Boots ! Vain were thy looks, vain thy speculations, as faces advanced and passed thee ! No ; there was no one set of benevolent features in which thou couldst espy a chivalrous sympathy for a man bleeding at a thousand pores for only seven-and-thirty pounds. Not a single passenger couldst thou detect with visage promising oil to thy wounds—every face looked hard and stony ; the good men of the earth were, it was plain, all within doors, and none save vulgar, mercenary calculators, walked the streets. This disappointment was felt the more acutely by the unfortunate Baron, from his firm conviction that there were thousands, ay, it might be tens of thousands of sons of honour who would rush to aid him in his little dilemma, could they be made to know it—could *he* only know their names and

dwelling-places! As it was, he seemed doomed, like a restless ghost, to walk the earth with the insult of Neatskin blooming on him, it not being permitted by the code of honour to borrow money of a man, and the money yet unpaid, to cut his throat as a receipt in full. The Baron groaned in bitterness of spirit, and was about to return to his unostentatious cabin, when a thought direct from Mercury, or some such inventive god, flashed through the Baron's brain, and irradiated the Baron's countenance. 'There was a way, with moderate luck, a glorious way to snatch revenge. He would stake all upon the one golden chance; Fortune, though blind, would take pity on the feelings of a gentleman, and at least give him the opportunity of living, or being buried like a man of honour.' Erect was the head, elastic the step of the Baron Valhallah Von Boots, as ennobled, sublimated by this thought, he took his way to a gaming-house. Now, granting that the Baron won the balance, that luck attended him, making up the hundred pounds, he might only win to lose the greatest stake that poor humanity can play for. To lose, with Von Boots, was to be assured of a gain; to win, was to risk the loss of all. If fortune smiled, a cypress wreath might be her especial gift. Was it really a waiter, or was it Death himself, that smilingly bowed to the Baron as he entered the Hall of Chance, and took from him his hat and walking-cane?

Winding-sheets grew about the candles, as the Baron Von Boots hovered round the table. He saw them not, else he had received them as gladdening the omens of his destiny. The Baron seized the dice-box.

> Honour! thou blood-stained god at whose red altar
> Sit war and homicide!

Didst thou not smile grimly on thy Boots, seeing him cast sixes? Again the Baron threw, but this time lost; again and again he staked, and won not. Honour and Fortune played the game, and Honour still threw deuce-ace. The Baron, reduced to his last five guineas, became almost desperate. If he lost them, he had

nought to do but to slink home, go to bed and sleep, distracting thought, until any hour to-morrow. If he won, if he recovered himself—if he pocketed the full one hundred pounds—delightful glorious prospect! An hour after daylight, rapier in hand, he might be tilting at his bosom friend.

Honour cogged the dice! The Baron—be the story brief—taking his hat and cane from the servant, descended the steps of the Temple the winner of full fifty guineas; enough to pay back the hundred to his rival, and more than enough to fee a surgeon. Ere Baron Von Boots slid between the sheets, he penned and sent a challenge, and with it the hundred pounds, to Philip Neatskin.

CHAPTER IV

The Baron never condescended to register a true and particular account of his feelings when he awoke with the full consciousness that he must quit his bed at a most unseasonable hour, to have, it might be, cold steel run through his abdomen, or curiously inserted between his ribs. It is a pity that mankind have not been enriched with the reflections which a man in the situation of Von Boots must invariably make. Did Honour appear to him the same bright majestic presence as some twelve hours ago? Or rather, did not Honour seem a meddling, exaggerating knave—a fellow, half bully, half mischief-maker. Did not this same Honour walk about delighted, when a little hole appeared, to rip it into a wide rent; when, but for his meddling and mischievous propensity, the flaw, neatly darned, had escaped all notice? Had not—we would have asked the Baron—had not his charity towards the imperfections of his fellow-creatures increased, and that very considerably, nay, grown, gourd-like, from a mere seedling, into a full-grown charity in one night? Had not his gall decreased?—was not

the bitterness almost sweetened away in a new benevolence? Was Neatskin such a scoundrel?

We will imagine this change in the Baron—we will, for a minute, fancy that these questions were put by the Baron's common-sense to the Baron, and then we must picture to ourselves Von Boots lying in his bed, pacific, gentle, subdued into philanthropy, willing to close his eyes, to fall into a dream of Arcady and the golden age, when all honour was comprised in not being a sheep-stealer, and when the true satisfaction of a gentleman was the satisfaction felt and taught by old Silenus with a swag-bellied wine-skin.

See—the Baron Von Boots is about to doze; he is sinking like a babe to rest, when—hark! what a rattling of the curtain-rings. And see what a hideous, grotesque, foolish, savage, simple monster thrusts his jolter head and hundred arms between the curtains, and as with a thousand roaring, squeaking, puling, laughing, croaking voices, cries 'Get up!' The Baron Von Boots, startled at the sound, sits bolt upright; he rubs his eyes—looks full at the monster, and in another second, bounces out of bed, and grasps his stockings!

Reader, the monster that startled the Baron Von Boots from dreaming—that now stands over him, watching him as he draws on his hose, is at once the most terrible and harmless of monsters. He is, in fact, whatever you choose to fashion him: if you tremble before him, he is an ogre, and may swallow you alive; if you snap your fingers before him, he walks off like a detected cheat: he is now as ravenous as a vulture, and now as incapable of injury as the greatest goose. To the Baron Von Boots, and to nine valorous men out of a dozen, the monster is the vilest tyrant; there he stands with the Baron, and now walks with him to the glass, and now, on perhaps the last morning Von Boots has left him of his mortal life, makes him take particular pains with his toilet, that, let the worst come, he may appear a decent corpse, doing credit to himself and to his slayer. And who—what is this grim despot? Who is this execrable tyrant—this

mixture of the mountebank and man-eater? Gentle reader, you and we are pieces of him; even so: little pieces, particles, if you will, of this same quack-salver and cannibal, christened and known as the World's Opinion. Baron Von Boots, and certainly Philip Neatskin, got up particularly early to cut one another's throats, only to please us, as you must allow, singularly interested in the matter. And whether one or both are killed, or whether they shake hands and embrace, the circumstances will, as you must also allow, considerably impede or accelerate our digestion. However, the monster sticks to the skirts of Baron Von Boots, whilst another monster—another and the same—drags Philip Neatskin out of bed; who, from the bottom of his heart, turned, as it is, to a jelly, curses the tyrant as he bows to him. Philip cannot tie his neckcloth, his fingers tremble so; his teeth—all that he has—rattle in his head; he damns the World's Opinion, and then, like a whimpering boy, suffers himself to be carried by it to punishment. Left alone, how differently would Philip construe what the big-mouthed world calls injuries. With what a chastened, elevated spirit would he consider the petty affronts of rash and ignorant persons, whose faults and follies—foibles he would call them—are made the silly prologues to sanguinary tragedies! In his own high and private philosophy he would think no jot the worse of his nose for being soundly pulled; but then there was the World's Opinion leering at the outraged member; there was yourself, to say nothing of ourselves, exacting reader, staring at the nose, and insisting, in the names of all the noses in the universe, on signal and summary vengeance!

Never, never did Philip Neatskin feel such benevolent yearnings towards the whole human race as on the morning when he rose and went forth to slaughter his fellow. Yes; at the moment—the awful moment—when he stood opposed to his deadly enemy, such was the fountain of goodness opened in his heart, that, we can answer for him, he felt a new-born love for all the

brotherhood of man. And with this exalting impulse, how provoking to be compelled, rapier in hand, to stand upon your guard!

The morning was chilly, the clouds hung low, black, and pall-like, a drizzling rain began to fall, and all things promised a most uncomfortable meeting, when Philip Neatskin, attended by his second and his surgeon, arrived on the ground, where was already waiting the Baron Von Boots, his very particular friend, and a gentleman who had performed, it was related, an amazing cure on the wounded ventricle of a heart, in a certain duel that had taken place somewhere in Upper Saxony. The Baron Von Boots received his adversary with a lofty air of politeness; the seconds bowed, and the professional gentlemen shook hands, making the warmest demonstrations of friendship. 'Why, why,' thought Philip Neatskin, leering at the amicable surgeons, 'why can we not all embrace?' With this Christian thought, Neatskin beckoned to his second: the exact words spoken to his second we heard not; but we can aver that the gentleman started suddenly, and peremptorily exclaimed, 'Impossible!' at which decision the face of Neatskin fell almost as low as his waistband, and the bile stirred up in his sensitive anatomy suddenly gave to his face the colour of a dying marigold. 'Impossible!' repeated the second, 'unless'—ha! there was hope, then, for Neatskin, who fairly grinned at the goodly prospect—'unless you give up the widow. Let the Baron carry off Mrs. Mouser, and you may shake hands, and go home to breakfast.' This was a hard condition to a man deeply smitten, as was Neatskin, with the lady and the money—a condition not to be acceded to. Without thinking of the consequences of the word, but thinking solely of the guineas of Mrs. Mouser, Neatskin, in his turn, exclaimed, 'Impossible!' And the second, with graceful alacrity, presented to the combatants choice of weapons.

Since the time of Boots and Neatskin there has been a considerable improvement in—may we use the word?

—the economy of duels. Swords are, happily, exploded and ball and powder—certainly powder—have taken their place. We consider this a most fortunate, nay, a most intelligent and enlightened reform of a wild and bloodthirsty practice. For instance, in these, our happy days, two gentlemen meet—the signal given, the deadly tubes are discharged, and one of the parties, by the counsel of his second, expresses himself, his cravat smelling horribly of gunpowder, perfectly satisfied. His wounded dignity has been dressed with saltpetre, charcoal, and lead—the last of which has gone by him like the idle wind—and he returns to his cares 'a wiser and a *sounder* man.' But who knows what imminent danger he has escaped? The bullet may have whistled within a hair's-breadth of his whiskers, it may have 'shot madly' by his heart—nay, more, the mortal ball, by some strange forgetfulness on the part of the second, may not have been deposited in the pistol; nevertheless, no man can question the propriety of the satisfaction, and the quarrel dies an honourable death. How different the result when gentlemen measured swords! The rapier was a cruel, uncompromising weapon; it would have blood. Ay, it may be urged, but then the slightest scratch would serve. Very true, we answer; but, in the heat and deadly enmity of a thrust, who shall ensure the length and depth of the scratch? It may not be 'so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door,' but sufficient for all mortal purposes. With swords there must be blood; let the seconds be the most pacific, the most prudent of men, let them go out with the very best and most humane intentions, they must place the naked, pointed weapons in the hands of the combatants—they cannot, by any accident, clap buttons to the steel. Now, the pistol permits a generous alternative. To return to our combatants.

Neatskin holds his sword as though he held a viper by the tail. The Baron Von Boots, all Mars in his sanguinary visage, prepares him for the onset. He takes off his coat, and Neatskin shudders at the cool

determination of his antagonist; did he mean to butcher him? Having carefully laid his coat upon the grass, the Baron next unbuttons his waistcoat, coolly whistling the while. 'You will excuse me,' cried Baron Von Boots, turning to Neatskin and his second, 'but dis is always my way;' and, as he spoke, the Baron laid his weapon on his upper garment, Neatskin almost groaning at the preparation; but when the Baron proceeded to take the silver-worked shirt-buttons from his wrist, and having placed them in the left-hand pocket of the only part of his dress he had determined to keep upon him, began to pull his shirt over his head, Neatskin fairly burst into tears! All his old friendship, all his latent regard for the Baron Valhallah Von Boots arose within him; he cast away the hated sword, the murderous steel drawn to be warmed within the heart's blood of his friend—and, rushing to Von Boots, flung his arms around him.

'What de devil! mein Gott! get out! What dis?' exclaimed the Baron, astonished at the *accolade*, and blinded, muffled by his best cambric, ignorant of the person who embraced him. 'What dis? get out!' again roared the Baron.

'No, no!' cried Neatskin; 'I feel it impossible—I cannot take your life—I cannot imbrue my hands in the blood of a man whom I love, respect, and honour. Dear Von Boots—'

'Neatskin,' cried the Baron, grinning with a contemptuous surprise, 'what—what is all dis?'

'Put on your coat,' answered Neatskin, incapable for the time of further speech; 'put—put on your coat.'

The Baron Von Boots, with a significant, self-satisfied look, adjusted his under garment, replaced his wrist-buttons, put on his waistcoat, and, thrusting his second arm into his coat, placidly observed to Neatskin—'Den, sir, I am to understand dat you give up de vidow?'

'I cannot be your assassin, dear Von Boots,' answered Neatskin.

The Baron, however, was in some matters a man of precision; therefore, unsatisfied with the vague assurance of Neatskin's friendship and humanity, Von Boots repeated the question touching Mrs. Agatha Mouser.

'There are ten thousand widows,' said Neatskin, 'but how many real friends? My dear Boots, win her and wear her.'

The Baron was about to embrace the generous Neatskin, when he paused to survey the person of his late opponent's second, who, astounded, scandalized, at what he called the meanness of his principal, muttered certain epithets, such as 'adventurer,' 'vagabond,' 'bastard of Odin,' and other names, which the Baron, in his humility, conceived to be applied to himself. However, that he might act without precipitancy, he begged to inquire of the gentleman if he, the Baron Von Boots, was the subject of his soliloquy? The second ingenuously answered yes; and declared himself quite prepared to maintain the truth of every disjointed syllable. The Baron bowed an equal readiness to dispute it; and Neatskin, that an affair in which his dear Von Boots was so vitally concerned might come to instant issue, avowed himself willing to second even the Baron's antagonist. The offer was coldly accepted, the late second, but now principal, observing that Neatskin 'would do as well as a better!' and, the preliminaries quickly arranged, behold the parties thrusting fiercely at each other. The Baron was an accomplished swordsman; by every rule of the art, he ought to have finished or disarmed his opponent in a trice, but luck, mere vulgar luck, so often in this world of chance steps in and wins the stake that deepest calculation long has played for. Luck, then, aided perhaps by youth, directed the arm of the Baron's antagonist, for, after a few passes, Valhallah Von Boots lay upon the grass, bleeding like the dying gladiator.

'Are you hurt?' asked Neatskin, very unnecessarily, of the wounded man. Shaking his head, he made no answer.

'Very serious,' said one of the surgeons in a low voice, and the other nodded ominously.

'And seconds are principals!' exclaimed Neatskin, in the tone of a man who had suddenly discovered a most unpleasant truth. Without waiting to take leave of his moribund friend, he ran with his brother second to the coach that had conveyed some of the party to the ground, and, jumping into it, swore to make the fortune of the coachman if for once he would drive like fifty furies. The Baron's antagonist, following the vehicle, supplicated to be taken in.

'Come, come,' cried one of the surgeons, minutely examining the wound, 'it's not so bad. You'll live and have the widow yet.'

'She has de gold,' said the Baron Von Boots, with a sickly smile.

'Heaps of it,' said Esculapius.

'And I—I,' cried the Baron, with exceeding satisfaction; 'I have,' and his wound poured out the evidence, 'I have de blood.'

THE CASTLE BUILDERS OF PADUA

Giulio and Ippolito were sons of a farmer living near Padua. The old man was of a quiet and placable temper, rarely suffering any mischance to ruffle him, but, in the firm and placid hope of the future, tranquillizing himself under the evil of the present. If blight came upon his corn one year, he would say 'twere a rare thing to have blights in two successive seasons; and so he would hope that the next harvest, in its abundance, might more than compensate for the scarcity of the last. Thus he lived from boyhood to age, and retained in the features of the old man a something of the lightness and vivacity of youth. His sons, however, bore no resemblance to their father. Instead of labouring on the farm they wasted their time in idly wishing that fortune had made them, in lieu of healthy, honest sons of a farmer, the children of some rich magnifico, that so they might have passed their days in all the sports of the times, in jousting, hunting, and in studying the fashions of brave apparel. They were of a humour at once impetuous and sulky, and would either idly mope about the farm, or violently abuse and ill-treat whomsoever accident might throw in their way. The old man was inly grieved at the wilfulness and disobedience of his sons, but, with his usual disposition, hoped that time might remedy the evil; and so, but rarely reproving them, they were left sole masters of their hours and actions.

One night, after supper, the brothers walked into the garden to give loose to their idle fancies, always yearning after matters visionary and improbable. It was a glorious night, the moon was at the full, and myriads

of stars glowed in the deep blue firmament. The air stirred among the trees and flowers, wafting abroad their sweetness; the dew glittered on the leaves, and a deep-voiced nightingale, perched in a citron tree, poured forth a torrent of song upon the air. It was an hour for good thoughts and holy aspirations. Giulio threw himself upon a bank, and, after gazing with intentness at the sky, exclaimed:

'Would that I had fields ample as the heaven above us!'

'I would,' rejoined Ippolito, 'I had as many sheep as there are stars.'

'And what,' asked Giulio, with a sarcastic smile, 'would your wisdom do with them?'

'Marry,' replied Ippolito, 'I would pasture them in your sageship's fields.'

'What!' exclaimed Giulio, suddenly raising himself upon his elbow, and looking with an eye of fire upon his brother; 'whether I would or not?'

'Truly, ay,' said Ippolito, with a stubborn signifieance of manner.

'Have a care,' cried Giulio, 'have a care, Ippolito; do not thwart me. Am I not your elder brother?'

'Yes; and marry, what of that? Though you came first into the world, I trow you left some manhood for him who followed after.'

'You do not mean to insist that, despite my will, despite the determination of your elder brother, you will pasture your sheep in my grounds?'

'In truth but I do.'

'And that,' rejoined Giulio, his cheek flushing, and his lip tremulous, 'and that without fee or recompense?'

'Assuredly.'

Giulio leaped to his feet, and, dashing his clinched hand against a tree, with a face full of passion, and in a voice made terrible by rage, he screamed, rather than said, 'By the Blessed Virgin but you do not!'

'And by St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins I protest I will.' This was uttered by Ippolito in a tone of banter and bravado that for a moment made

the excited frame of Giulio quiver from head to foot. He gazed at the features of Ippolito, all drawn into a sneer, and for a moment gnashed his teeth. He was hastily approaching the scoffer, when, by an apparently strong effort, he arrested himself, and, turning upon his heel, struck hastily down another path, where he might be seen pacing with short, quick steps, whilst Ippolito, leaning against a tree, carelessly sang a few lines of a serenata. This indifference was too much for Giulio; he stopped short, turned, and then rapidly came up to Ippolito, and with a manner of attempted tranquillity, said, 'Ippolito, I do not wish to quarrel with you; I am your elder brother; then give up the point.'

'Not I,' replied Ippolito, with the same immovable smile.

'What, then, you are determined that your sheep shall, in very despite of me, pasture in my fields?'

'They shall.'

'Villain!' raved Giulio; and ere the word was well uttered he had dashed his clinched hand in his brother's face. Ipollito sprang like a wild beast at Giulio, and for some moments they stood with a hand at each other's throat, and their eyes, in the words of the Psalmist, were 'whetted' on one another. They stood but to gain breath, then grappled closer. Ippolito threw his brother to the earth, huddling his knees upon him, furious blows were exchanged, but scarce a sound was uttered, save at intervals a blasphemous oath or a half-strangled groan. Giulio was completely overpowered by the superior strength and cooler temper of his brother; but, lying prostrate and conquered, his hands pinioned to his breast, and Ippolito glaring at him with malicious triumph, he cursed and spat at him. Ippolito removed his hand from his brother's throat, and ere his pulse could beat, Giulio's poniard was in his brother's heart. He gave a loud shriek, and fell a streaming corpse upon his murderer. The father, aroused by the sound, came hurrying to the garden; Giulio, leaping from under the dead body, rushed by the old man, who was all too speedily bending over his

murdered child. From that hour hope and tranquillity forsook the father; he became a brain-sick, querulous creature, and in a few months died almost an idiot. Giulio joined a party of robbers, and, after a brief but dark career of crime, was shot by the sbirri.

Ye who would build castles in the air—who would slay your hours with foolish and unprofitable longings—ponder on the visionary fields, the ideal sheep of Giulio and Ippolito.

CAT-AND-FIDDLE MORALITIES.

For fifteen years had the large wooden arm-chair of the Cat-and-Fiddle been consecrated to the use of Captain Bam. He would sit in it as it were a throne; and the customary guests of the hostelry paid him affectionate loyalty. He had won all hearts by his odd, kind ways; he had become the familiar oracle of all by his strange, yet wise sayings. He had, too, the rare and happy knack of so mixing his wisdom with his drollery, that when men laughed and swallowed his jest, they also, like children cheated with sweetened physic, swallowed something that in proper season would do them hearty good. And then there was a mystery about Captain Bam; and, at times, mystery is a sort of sauce to human character. It will now and then give a strange relish to what without it would be insipid commonplace. Not that it was so with Captain Bam. Certainly not; but the mystery was this. Fifteen years before—on a sharp, wintry afternoon—he crossed the threshold of the Cat-and-Fiddle. He carried a small leathern pack, and appeared otherwise appointed for a long pilgrimage. It was, we say, sharp, blighting weather, and Captain Bam called hastily for a mug of ale. 'A mug of ale, and directly,' said Captain Bam, 'for I can't stop a minute.' The ale was brought, and the Captain hastily took a long draught thereof. He then drew his breath, and a smile as from the very roots of his heart broke over his face, and his eye strangely glimmered and twinkled upon the landlord. '*Eureka!*' said Captain Bam, and the host looked. '*Eureka!*' again exclaimed the Captain. 'Take my pack,' he said, in a voice trembling with the fulness of satisfaction, 'take my pack—I will rest here.'

And Captain Bam—his pack removed—sank in the large arm-chair. It seemed that his travels were ended;

that, in a happy moment, he had accomplished the purpose of his life; that all his future existence would be an appointed state of rest. There was a little wooden nook—a sort of summer-house, at the end of a long garden—which, after few words, he hired of the host; whence every night he came to bestow his talk upon the guests of the Cat-and-Fiddle. 'And how he would talk! Ha! better than a printed book.' Such was the oft avowed opinion of his gladdened hearers. And now the captain is dead. His body lies in the churchyard of the market town, but two miles distant from the Cat-and-Fiddle. He had himself written his epitaph. It is a model of brief simplicity—enough to bring a blush into the cheek of many a stone-faced cherub. The epitaph has only one word: it is this: 'BAM.'

The Captain died, but not his stories. No; there sat every night in the fireside corner of the Cat-and-Fiddle an ardent, passionate lover of the mind of Bam. He was a silent Pylades—a mute Pythias. He would sit and store himself with the syllables of Bam; then, like the bee, would he fly rejoicing home, and ere he slept hive the wisdom in enduring ink. That wisdom is now before us. The little vellum-bound book, its pages finely written as with the point of a needle, lies upon our desk. Upon the forehead of its title-page there are these words, 'CAT-AND-FIDDLE MORALITIES'; touchingly recollectful of the genial haunt where their fine wisdom was audible.

There are—no, we will not tell the number of stories enshrined in this little book. But from time to time we will lay one before the reader, in what we believe to be the very words of Bam.

Yes: we will begin with the first. Here it is—the title beautifully engrossed, from which we guess the legal yearnings of the chronicler—here it is.

The Tale of a Tiger.

Perhaps, my friends, you have never heard of a place called Singapore. Well, it 's no matter if you haven't.

It 's a long, long way east, where all sorts of shipping trade, and where all sorts of people live—Chinamen, Malays, Javanese, Bengalees, English, Dutch, and what not. Well, there was at Singapore a certain Dutch family in the pepper trade. They were named Vandervermin. They were all rich, cautious, heavy people; all save Jacob Vandervermin, who when a mere youth was left a poor orphan; left, as it might have seemed, on purpose to exercise the loving benevolence of prosperous uncles and aunts, and flourishing cousins. Alas! the whole body of the Vandervermins considered the poverty of Jacob as a blight—a family reproach; a nuisance that every one sought to put off upon the other. Jacob was the little toe of clay that disgraced the Vandervermin body of brass. And what made him worse, he was, for one with Dutch blood in his veins, a sprightly, frolicsome fellow. He was a beggar, and yet, with a stony hardness of heart—as Peter Vandervermin, the head of the family, declared—he would laugh and make offensive jokes upon his wretchedness. There are men who cannot understand a joke, simply because it is a thing that carries no worth with it in a ledger. Now Peter Vandervermin received a joke—especially the joke of a poor man—as an offence to his judgment and a sidelong sneer at his pocket. His wife, Drusila Vandervermin, was of the same belief; and in this goodly creed man and wife had reared a numerous family. Jacob Vandervermin was the only outcast of the name who had ever disgraced it by a jest. It was plain he would come to no good; plain that he would die the death of a sinner. When one day his body was found mortally mangled by a tiger, not one of the Vandervermins was shocked or surprised. No; they had always said that something dreadful would happen to him, and it had come about. Jacob was buried—handsomely buried. Not one of the Vandervermins would have given him when alive the value of a coffin nail; but, being dead, the case was altered. The pride of the family was concerned in the funeral; hence, they respected themselves in their treatment of

the deceased. Doubtless the ghost of a despised, ill-used relation is propitiated by a costly burial; and thus many a cousin or half-brother who has glided through life in a cobweb coat has superfine cloth upon his coffin.

I had this history of Jacob Vandervermin from a Chinaman. He repeated it to me with the eloquence and fervour of a believer. The Chinamen—at least the sort that live at Singapore—believe that when the tiger kills its first man, his ghost becomes its very slave; bound, ordered by fate to be a sort of jackal to the tiger; compelled by destiny to find the beast its dinners, even among his kith and kin. Hence, a tiger having carried off one of a family, not one of the survivors is from that moment safe. My Chinaman—he passed for a very learned fellow among his tribe—had the most intimate knowledge of the Vandervermin tragedy, which, after his own lofty fashion—painting his story as though he was painting his native porcelain—he related to me. I shall give it to you in plain, cold English; for, my good friends all, be it known to you, I scorn the flourish of a traveller.

At the age of eighteen Jacob Vandervermin—having been knocked from uncle to uncle, the poor, passive family shuttlecock—fell at length into the counting-house of his richest, and oldest uncle, Peter. For two years did Jacob eat the bread of dependence; for with that bitter word was his bread always buttered—when he awakened the inextinguishable ire of his rich and orderly relative. Jacob had been guilty of a gross wickedness; in fact, of a crime, in the eyes of Peter Vandervermin, of the deepest dye. He had, in a moment of culpable neglect, let fall a large, unsightly blot of ink upon his uncle's ledger. To the mind of Peter Vandervermin, his graceless nephew had thrown an indelible stain upon the white reputation of the family; at least Peter so avenged the fault, for without a word he seized a ruler that lay upon the desk, and with it smote the skull of the blotting offender. Jacob uttered no syllable; but instantly closing the ledger,

and raising it with both his hands, he brought down the book of figures with such precise vehemence upon the head of his uncle, that the principal of the house of Vandervermin & Co. lay stunned and prostrate on the floor of his own temple—that is, of his own counting-house.

Now Jacob was not a man to give unnecessary trouble. He knew that if he remained it would only cause his uncle the pain and the perplexity of thrusting him from the house, and therefore, with scarcely a penny in his purse, did Jacob don his hat and cross his uncle's threshold.

Vain was it for him to beg the aid of any of the name of Vandervermin. What, he—a poor creature, too, a pauper, a beggar, a—no, there was no worse word for him—he smite so good, so tender an uncle! No, he might starve, perish; it would be to share his wickedness to relieve him. It was a secret comfort to the Vandervermins that Jacob, in a momentary forgetfulness, had knocked down his uncle. That sacrilegious blow had for ever and for ever snapped the thousand fine ties that—despite of his previous errors—still held him to the family heart. Now he might perish; and the sooner the better. The only hope was that he would be drowned, or decently starved to death; that, for the sake of the family, he would not come to be hanged, however richly he deserved it.

For some weeks Jacob continued to live without money. Nothing, perhaps, so eminently shows the superiority, the crowning greatness of the human animal—a fact so well attested in many cases—as the power of man to subsist for a time without cash. He is a self-wonder while he does it; nevertheless, the miracle is performed. Tear a plant up by the roots—fling it aside—and it perishes. Shut a cat up in an empty, mouseless garret, and one by one her nine lives will go out. But take money from man—money, which is the root of evil, a root upon which man best flourishes, thereby proving the wickedness of his nature—and still, still he lives. Perhaps, somehow, the carnivorous,

omnivorous animal becomes an air-plant, and so feeds upon the atmosphere about him. I have met with many air-plants of the sort. There is not a city, a town, without them. Such men get over days, and weeks, and months, and wonder how they have so successfully travelled thus far to the grave. They must rub their hands, that they have cheated what seemed to them a vital principle of nature.

And in this way Jacob Vandervermin lived. Every day seemed to him a difficult stepping-stone to get over, and yet the night saw him on the other side of it. But it is hard, miserable work, this keeping check against time by meals in the bowels: this incessant looking for butcher and baker as the allies against death, and wondering and trembling from day to day, lest they should not come to the rescue. My friends, this is hard, debasing work—I have known it.

One day, with thoughts heavy as lead upon his brain, did Jacob Vandervermin wander forth. He wandered and wandered, until, weary and spent, he sank upon the stump of a tree in a desolate place. 'How—how,' cried Jacob, 'shall I live another day!'

What a mole-eyed thing is man! How he crucifies himself with vain thoughts—how he stands upon tip-toe, straining his eyestrings, trying to look into the future, when at that moment the play is over—the show is done.

Jacob had scarcely uttered—'How shall I live another day!' when a tiger, a royal tiger—wherefore a cruel, treacherous, bloodthirsty beast should be called royal, I know not—when a royal tiger—fell like a thunderbolt upon him.

As a very large tom-cat snaps in its mouth a very small mouse, and looking statelily around seems to say—the mouse kicking all the while—'Pooh, pooh; why this is nothing!' so did the royal tiger look and speak, with Jacob Vandervermin writhing and screaming in its jaw. Well, tigers make short work of men. Almost as short as man himself sometimes makes of his fellow biped. Jacob Vandervermin—it was his luck to meet

with a benevolent tiger; he was not played with before he was finally crunched—Jacob Vandervermin was soon dead.

And now my friends, prepare for a wonder! Long before the tiger had picked the bones of Jacob—Jacob's ghost stood, like a waiting footman, meekly behind the dining animal. There was Jacob in his wide, parasol-like hat of straw—his white jacket and trousers, in all things the same as when he lived, save that he was so transparent the eye could see through him: and then his look was so serene and passionless! It was odd to see how meekly the ghost looked on the while the tiger gnawed and crunched, and then with its rasping tongue cleaned the bones of the ghost's late body. It was plain that the ghost cared no more for what he once thought the most valuable thing under heaven, than if it were an old threadbare coat, put aside for a glorious garment. Thus, after a few minutes, the ghost seated itself upon the stump of the tree—where, a short time before, it had sat in the flesh—and twiddling its thumbs, looked composedly about it. And when the tiger had finished Jacob—for the poor animal had not for a week before tasted so much as a field mouse—it stalked away to its den, the ghost of Jacob following it.

Gorged to the whiskers, almost for two whole days did the tiger sleep. And then rising and stretching itself—like a Mogul after a debauch—the tiger said, 'Jacob!'

'What wills my lord?' answered Jacob's ghost.

'Jacob, I must sup: something nice, now—something delicate. I don't like to say it to your face, Jacob, but you haven't quite agreed with me. I could fancy something mild and tender to-night.'

For a moment the ghost was thoughtful; then observed, 'What says my lord to a nice sugar-cane salad?'

The tiger leered somewhat pityingly at the ghost; then saying 'Look here!' opened its jaws. Even the ghost of Jacob shivered—like moonlight upon water—

at the dreadful array of teeth. 'Think you,' said the tiger, 'such teeth were made for salads?'

'Tigers, I have heard, were not always flesh-eaters,' said the ghost, a little boldly.

'Why, there is a story among tigers,' answered the ingenuous brute, 'that at one time—but it's a long time ago—we used to crop clover and trefoil and wild thyme, for all the world like foolish little lambs. And then suddenly—but how it came about I never heard—we took to eating the kids and lambkins that before we played with. How the change began, and who took to killing first, I know not: I have only heard it wasn't tigers; and now, I only know that I must sup: that this very night I must have another Vandervermin. Have you any babies in the house?'

'None: I assure you, my lord, not one,' answered the ghost.

'That's a pity,' said the tiger, 'for I feel it, my stomach needs something tender and succulent. However, lead on: air and exercise may tone my vitals a little. Why do you tarry, sirrah?'—and the tiger growled like a stage tyrant—'you know your destiny; lead on.'

The ghost seemed to feel the truthful force of the rebuke, and immediately led the way. As they walked on, the ghost espied a remarkably fine ox, strayed from a neighbouring farm. 'See, my lord, see!' cried the shadow.

'No, no,' said the tiger, a little contemptuously. 'I can't do that sort of thing now: having once tasted the goodness of man, I must go on with him. No, no; I thank my luck I now know what good living really is.' And then the tiger paused, and twisting its tail gracefully about its legs, as sometimes an ingenuous maid will twist about a gown flounce, the brute observed—'What a lovely night! How the air freshens one's spirits! What a beautiful moon—and how the stars shine—and the airs whisper among the tamarind trees, like unseen fairies making love! You are sure, Jacob, there is not a baby in the house?'

'Nothing like it, my lord,' answered Jacob.

'What is the best you can promise me?' asked the tiger.

'To-night, I'm afraid nothing better than Drusilla, my aunt,' said the ghost. The tiger growled dubiously; and then said, 'Well, we can but look at her. You know the safest way—so mind what you're about.'

Cautiously, stealthily, goaded by fate, did the ghost of Jacob lead the tiger to the mansion of Peter Vandervermin. Leaping a low wall, they gained a garden, and proceeded along a winding walk, until they came to a pretty little summer pavilion, wherein sat aunt Drusilla, as was her wont, knitting, with a large Dutch pug at her feet.

'There 's your supper,' said Jacob, pointing to the withered old gentlewoman.

'Humph!' growled the tiger, and angrily twitched its tail—'humph! It 's against my stomach; I can't do it.'

'What think you,' urged the ghost, 'of the pug just for a snack?'

The tiger curled its whiskers with a look of disgust, and growling 'dropsical,' turned supperless away. And all the next night did the tiger fast. But sweet is the sauce of hunger; for on the third evening the tiger rose and stretched itself, and its eyes glared with brightening flame as it said—'Come along, Jacob: I don't know that the old woman will eat badly after all.'

Jacob again conducted the destroyer to the house. Again showed Drusilla, unconscious of her fate, knitting, knitting. There was a slight growl—a spring—an old woman's scream—a yap, yap from the pug—and then the wall was leapt—and Peter Vandervermin was a widower.

I will not follow the tiger to its banquet. Suffice it to say, the tiger ate and slept. However, very ill and feverish did the tiger awake in the morning. 'Jacob,' cried the tiger, 'what 's the matter with me? Phew! I can hardly move.'

'Perhaps,' said Jacob, 'my lord has just a stitch in his side.'

'No, no,' said the tiger, 'I feel 'em now; it's that abominable old woman's knitting needles.'

'Every rose has its thorn, my lord,' said the ghost, joking as a ghost may be supposed to joke. 'You never find a woman without pins and needles.'

'Jacob,' cried the tiger, 'either you come of a very bad family, or, after all, man-eating is by no means so wholesome—however pleasant it may be—as a hearty simple meal off a buffalo, a deer, or anything of that sort.'

'Then why, my lord,' urged the ghost, 'why not return to the humbler diet?'

'That 's all very well, Jacob. Why don't men—with red noses and no insides—turn from arrack and new rum, and drink only at the diamond spring? I begin to feel myself no better than a drunkard: yes, I fear I'm a lost tiger. It 's very nice—very delicious to eat a man at night—but it 's like what I've heard of drink—what a headache it leaves in the morning! Ha!' cried the beast, 'I'm afraid I'm making quite a man of myself. Look at my tongue, Jacob; it 's as hard and as dry, you might grind an axe upon it. Oh, that dreadful old woman!'—and the tiger closed its heavy, bloodshot eyes, and tried to sleep.

Only three days passed, and then the tiger leapt up, and licking itself all over—as though it was going out to an evening party, and wished to put the very best gloss upon its coat—the creature cried—'Come away, Jacob; I must have another Vandervermin.'

'Oh, my lord,' cried the ghost, 'think what you'll suffer in the morning.'

'*That* for the morning,' cried the tiger, whisking its tail—'I tell you, Jacob, I intend to make a night of it. Slave, lead on.'

And thus for three months, conducted by the fate-enforced ghost, did the tiger continue to sup off Vandervermins. Uncles and aunts, cousins male and female, in all eight, had the tiger devoured, when one night

the brute carried off the ninth and last victim in the person of Justus Vandervermin, lawyer and usurer. The tiger—strange to say—devoured every bit of him; but it was the brute's last morsel; it never could digest him. Justus Vandervermin remained, like so much india-rubber, in the vitals of the tiger. Nothing could stir the lawyer.

'Jacob,' cried the brute, feeling its last hour approach. 'I shall die, and your ghost will be at rest. I forgive you—but why—why didn't you tell me that Justus was a lawyer?'

And with these words the tiger died, and the ghost of Jacob Vandervermin was instantly at peace.

'And if all this story isn't true, Captain'—asked one of the Cat-and-Fiddle company—'what do you get out of it?'

'Why, true or not, this much,' answered Captain Bam; 'never to neglect and ill-use a poor relation. For however low and helpless he may seem, the day may come when he shall have about him the strength of a tiger.'

THE SICK GIANT AND THE DOCTOR DWARF

CHAPTER I

ONCE upon a time——

(How oft the old, old words, like silver bells, have rung us to a brief holiday—summoned the gravest of us to the hearth, to take from the lips of fable sweetest truth !)

Once upon a time, there lived a Giant and a Dwarf.

Far away, away across the sea, and glowing like a jewel in the light of heaven, there lay an island ; an island heaped, like Plenty's lap, with the best bounties of the earth. Trees, fruits, and flowers, with the freshness, flavour, and scents of Paradise, adorned and enriched the spot ; and there was no foul, no hurtful thing, to beset with fear and danger valley, field, or wood.

This island was inhabited by a race of little people—so little, that the tallest of them would scarcely reach the knee of ordinary men ; but their wisdom, their goodness was as the knowledge and virtue of the noblest of mortals. Indeed, it might be said of them, that, in their small anatomies there was no room for evil thoughts ; that intelligence and virtue alone possessed them.

When or how these little folk became the lords of the island we know not, and seek not to know. Any way, they were blessed people. Their happy land seemed to lie nearer heaven than does the common earth. They seemed to have a more direct intelligence with nature ; or, it may be, that the purity of their hearts and lives made them readier scholars ; for truth and wisdom came to them as with the air they drew ; and

a harmony of thought and action was their daily, household music—constant in their bosoms as the rippling sea, that died in murmurs on the golden beach.

And so these little people lived without grief or envy; and died, as flowers die, without a pang. For many, many generations this felicity had blessed them; when they were doomed to feel the fulness of brotherhood with the rest of mortals, in the fullness of fear.

One morning the sun rose redly and sluggishly: the sullen ball hung heavily in the sky, that was not, as every morning, shot and interwoven with golden glories, but, without ray or fleck of fire, was dim and dead. And the hearts of the little people felt a new pain; and tears, with an unknown bitterness, broke into their eyes. The whole island seemed to grow torpid beneath a spell, of which the terrible sun appeared to the beholders the avenging cause and instrument.

Suddenly, a sunbeam—one only, red as blood—pointed, as with a finger, to a certain place upon the beach; and, without a pause, without a contrary thought, all the little people ran towards the spot, following that finger of Fate.

The islanders suddenly halted in their race. Even as one man, the crowd stopped short; and even as one heart should beat, so beat the hearts of the multitude, at the wonder, the wonder and terror, they looked upon!

For they beheld a rock—a huge red rock—carved in their own shape, but of so vast a size that hundreds of themselves would fail to give its bulk; a mass of rock, in the figure of a man, lying prostrate on the beach.

With what wonder—wonder deepened by a strange fear—the little islanders looked, and peeped, and pried about the monster! Its head wore a very wood of hair; and wild tangled bushes were its beard. Its eyes were shut; but then, it was a thing of rock, a senseless mass; therefore what need even of the show of eyes?

It was strange; but the mere presence of that mute rock monster, seemed on the sudden to cloud the clear thoughts and affright the constant hearts of the little

people. Many of them felt and knew their pure souls leaving them as they looked upon the wonder, and then—they could not break from the charm—they looked the more intently.

'It is plain,' said one of the islanders, 'plain that this thing has fallen from the sun; has been dropped upon our island, that as our god we might worship it. The sun sends it us, and the sun's finger of light shews us the divinity. Let us kneel to it and adore it.'

Now, although the crowd made no signs of worship, nevertheless they uttered no word of rebuke; they heard the folly, but had no heart to gainsay the foolishness. And still they looked upon the prostrate mass; and there seemed—so were the faces of the beholders darkened—as though a cloud of error rose from that hideous bulk, a cloud that shadowed the brows of men, and for awhile obscured the face of heaven.

'Let us worship and adore it,' repeated the first speaker.

'Worship it with fire, and then adore its ashes,' cried another; and his voice sang like an arrow through the crowd, so did it smite them.

'Fire and ashes!' was the cry: the better hearts of the multitude returned to them; and as the shout arose, the brightened sun leapt higher in the heavens.

Instantly the crowd sought fire. In a few minutes, flaming torches, thick as fire-flies, moved and danced about the mass of rock; then—and for a moment only—scorched it!

With a loud, long roar, like shouts of linked thunder, that tremendous mass leapt to its feet; it clenched its fists—like the huge boles of knotted oaks they looked—and stamped the earth, that shuddered at the shock. Gnashing its teeth, while, like the vexed sea, its features worked with rage, it seemed as though some mountain-peak had, at a word, been thrown up from the bowels of the earth—a clayey mass, possessed by devils.

All the islanders, with frozen hearts, fell back—their torches flying from their hands like anvil-sparks. And still the Giant roared; and towering to his fullest

height, he cast a blighting shadow on that lovely island.

How came the Giant there ? What fate had flung him, like a stranded sea-monster, on the shore of that beautiful and innocent spot ? Why was the happiness of a good and gentle race made the doomed sport of a mountain mass, that seemed human, but had within it no touch of human truth ? Indeed, we know not ; and, docile reader, seek not you to know.

After a while, the Giant, still smarting from the torches, and still rubbing the burns with his hands until he roared the louder, rushed, to cool himself, into the sea.

Oh ! how the hearts of the islanders rose with hope ! The monster was a monster of the deep, and would return to his old abyss. No. Still the Giant tumbled and wallowed in the sea, like a rudderless hulk ; and then, after awhile, he stood upright, and again strode back to the island.

' Bakkuk ! Bakkuk ! ' cried the monster ; and it seemed to the islanders that the Giant called his own name. Be this as it may ; as ' Bakkuk ' was the first articulate sound uttered by the creature, so among the trembling islanders, Bakkuk was the known name of their terror.

How the little folk shuddered as they beheld the Giant stare about him with a growing malice in his looks ! Heavily he groaned, and with his clenched hand smote his belly, as though some pain was gnawing there. Could he be hungry ? was the shuddering thought that, like a blighting gust, swept strangely through the crowd. Could the Giant be hungry ? and, if so, what would be the Giant's food ?

Again Bakkuk—for that shall be the Giant's name—growled and roared, and with his doubled hand struck himself. Poor, empty comfort ! To unreasoning giants, knocks will not go down for flesh.

A dreadful grin pulled out the features of the Giant as he strode towards a clump of cocoa trees. In a moment he had gathered the fruit ; with a thought had

torn away the husk, and was grinding the kernels with his teeth.

A ray of comfort dawned upon the islanders as they lay scattered and hidden around. 'The Giant eats fruit; he is not a cruel monster; he shall live upon yams, and have green sugar-cane. Bakkuk may be made serviceable and neighbourly. The Giant is, without doubt, a tender and a bloodless Giant.'

These were the thoughts creeping through the hearts of the crowd. Poor souls! they lived upon fruits and pulse; they never bought a meal with a life. But Bakkuk was of very different stomach. What food supplied his baby dinners, who fed him, and how the morsels were minced and sauced to make them savoury to his infant palate, we must be content to leave in the realm of riddle. But it is plain that Bakkuk will in no way content himself with fruits or corn, whilst islanders —whom he is hereafter to discover—shall abound. There is a look of uneasy contempt in the Giant—moreover a hungry glance as of an appetite falsely provoked as he throws away the husks and shells; the enquiring look of a man who asks of himself, 'What next?' We shall see.

CHAPTER II

Instinctively the Dwarf people, made anxious by the hungry looks of the Giant—for, in their innocence, they had the like terror of Bakkuk, that small singing-birds have of hawks—withdrew themselves among the thickets and bushes, that they might, by many opening narrow ways, reach a plain in the centre of the island. Here they would meet in general council, to consider means of defence and deliverance. And here, as the sun shone in the midst of the heavens, that wore their wonted brightness and serenity, here all the people, their homes left empty, were gathered together.

'Zim! Zim!' cried the multitude, as from one throat; 'Zim!'

Immediately, a dwarf, with some forty years, light as a crown of flowers, upon his brow, arose and prepared to address himself to the people. Ere, however, he could speak, there arose shouts of 'Death to the Monster!'

'Long life to the Giant!' was the only answer of Zim, the dwarf. A low long buzz of discontent ran through the crowd; nevertheless, no one thought to speak against the authority of that wise Dwarf—that good, benevolent little one, whose wisdom and whose virtue made the wonder and the reverence of the island. For Zim knew all things; and knowing them, was the gentler for the knowledge. When only an hour old—so ran the story—Zim had been carried from his mother's bosom by a fairy; carried to some distant place to learn all things even in his babyhood, his mother sleeping the while—years passing with her even as balmy minutes. That Zim might know the beginning of all things, he was conveyed into an egg, so said certain folks of the island; but this story was derided by others, who received it only as a fancy, the fantastic shadow of some mysterious truth.

'By the egg of Zim!' was, nevertheless, the most solemn form of speech to all the islanders. And so let it pass that the baby Zim, an hour old, was nourished in the egg of an ostrich; that, whilst so nourished, the baby learned the beginning and progress of all natural causes; that, after a time, the infant dwelt in that ostrich shell. There were those of the islanders who had pictures of the egg, with its little wicket gate, and its one long window, the sun passing through it in golden rain. But these stories are given even as parts of a Christmas feast—at the will of the guests to be swallowed or refused.

Any way, Zim was reverenced by all the island folk; and to him, in their present peril, they looked for succour against the monster cast among them.

'Speak!' said Zim, having waited until the murmur was hushed; 'speak!' and the good Dwarf smiled. 'If you will the Giant's death, how shall I kill him?'

'Shiver him like wind-swept dust.'—

'Strike him dead as a stone.'—

'Watch him where he lies down to sleep, and then, with a flash, toss him to the clouds.'—

Such were the destroying words of divers councillors; for they knew that Zim, with even a wire's point, could work what force he would; he had so many times shown the island folks his mysterious mastery.

'Shall we not first learn,' asked Zim, 'whether the Giant be nothing but evil?'

'It is learnt—learnt in his looks,' was the answer.

'But, granting the monster be wicked, though not all wickedness, may we not find some good, and make it further grow in him?' inquired Zim.

'Find wild honey in the sea sand!' was the reproach.

'Well, then,' answered Zim, 'the Giant must die.'

'Hurrah! The good Zim! the great Zim!' shouted all the island folk.

'When,' continued Zim, 'the Giant shall be proved all bad, all worthless. The shell shall be shivered to atoms, if it be known there is not even a seed pearl within it. For my part, I am content to run every risk.'

'Ha! ha!' laughed an old dwarf; and then he frowned, and again he chuckled, sneeringly, 'Yes, mighty Zim, 'tis well for you—you are safe. Not a thousand giants, and you would hinder them, could enter your house: let them lay their little finger on your latch, and they are struck down as by a stone from heaven. With a thought, too, you can leap into your tulip-boat; and that air-bubble—haven't we seen it float and glitter in the sky?—lifts it to the sun. Well enough for you,' repeated the aged scoffer; 'but we have no tulip-boats, no air-bubbles to fly away with us.'

At this moment the whole island echoed with the savage laughter of the Giant. The island people groaned; and then, grinding their teeth, muttered, 'Death to the monster!'

And Zim, with a yet brighter smile and blither voice, cried, 'Live the Giant!'

Again the horrid roar of Bakkuk seemed to rend the island; and the women screamed and trembled, and hugged their little ones closer to their breasts.

'There 's hope in laughter,' said Zim. 'I have a mind to see what pleases the monster. Who will attend me? The sight may be worth the journey. Who?' There was a pause, and each looked in each other's face; a pause, and no answer. 'It matters not,' said Zim, 'I'll go alone; and in good season bring you tidings of the Giant.'

And as Zim turned to go on his way, all the crowd looked the lighter, and all shouted, 'The good Zim! the great Zim! By the mighty Egg, the magnificent Zim!'

For two days and two nights Zim, unseen, followed the footsteps of the Giant. Still did the Dwarf watch the monster Giant at his meals, as he wildly plucked the bread-fruit, and biting and then snarling at it, flung it away. Then the Giant would throw himself upon the earth and tangle his nails in the underwood, and tear it up, and drag it through his teeth, as though he had a dim sense that some strange, some wild enjoyment might be torn from it. And then the monster would stretch himself at length, and with his blood-rimmed eyes flash hatred to the sun.

On the third morning, the Giant, urged by some headlong will, strode towards that part of the island where rose the houses and temples of the dwarf-people. Still Zim followed the steps of the monster. As the Giant looked down upon the roofs, there gleamed in his eyes a strange half-witted glance. Gabbling, he passed on until he towered over the house of Zim, which, unseen by Bakkuk, the mighty little Dwarf entered. Now, this house stood upon a small eminence, alone, and at some distance from all other habitations. Cunningly, curiously did Bakkuk pry down upon the abode of the wizard Dwarf; then, jabbering, the Giant dropt upon his knees, and peeped about the dwelling as a baboon would look into a twisted shell. Then Bakkuk laid his hand upon a little piece of metal, no thicker than a rush,

and with the act the Giant was flung to the earth in a twisted heap, roaring like a volcano. And many of the island folk who had left the crowd upon the plain, many of them hid in trees and holes around, clapped their hands and shouted ; for they acknowledged in the overthrow of the monster the wisdom dwelling in the powers of Zim.

All night the Giant lay insensible, and still Zim turned a deaf ear to the desires of the little people ; he would not kill the monster. ' Wait awhile, let us see ; there may be good in him. Wherefore kill, when, as you see, I can, at a thought, make him powerless ? '

The little folk appeared to yield to the reasons of Zim ; nevertheless, one among another, they angrily asked, ' Wherefore not kill him ? '

' Wait awhile,' again urged the wise and placid Zim ; ' wait awhile ; the monster's very ignorance shall help to tame him.'

The next day, Bakkuk began slowly to move. With many groans he rose from the earth, and with a kind of half-brutish, half-reasoning look, stared and gazed at the house of Zim. A higher sense seemed to be awakening in him.

The monster retraced his way ; and turning, passed into the gloom of a forest—a forest never entered by any of the islanders. By common consent it seemed a place to be shunned alike by speech or foot : no man spoke of it—walked in it. Nevertheless Zim, chartered by his cause, tracked the monster, who, like a hound following the scent, went eagerly into the darkness. There was a lurid look of appetite kindled in the Giant's face : he jabbered and gabbled, and his huge chest heaved like a mountainous wave with the storm still dying in it. Then the Giant dropped like a stone upon the rank grass and tangled underwood ; and, as he tore up all that grew about him, he howled and screamed with terrible delight—howled as a wolf howls and tears at a grave, its paw close upon the dead man's cheek.

The whole frame of the Giant seemed shaken with a horrid joy. His hair was twisted and stirred like

waking snakes. Louder and louder he yelled; then broke into snaffling laughter.

Still the monster tears at grass and roots; still digs into the earth, until with hungry fingers, and elbow-deep, he sweats in the soil. Suddenly he screams with rapture; screams like a slave of the mine that, with a diamond, finds his liberty. He snatches his hand from the earth, it grasps a root twisted like an adder; with a shout of joy he buries it in his mouth and grinds it beneath his teeth; and as he drinks the delicious poison of its juice, his eyes glow and sparkle, and his face grows purple as a grape.

CHAPTER III

Dreadful throughout the island was the joyous howling of the monster. From that forbidden forest came cries, and shouts, and horrid laughter, as though a band of fiends were keeping devilish holiday; and then the Giant would break into a sort of chant—then a minute pause, as though wondering at his own music—and then laugh the louder, and chant a wilder and a wilder note.

Crowds of the people had gradually been drawn towards the forest. They listened with wonder as they tried to piece out of the Giant's music some rude meaning. In vain; they only heard the outbreak of a brutal nature, drunk to madness. For still the Giant clawed and dug in the earth; still did he pluck up root after root; and, still crushing the juice between his teeth, still did he feed his fury, still rising and raging with the drug.

For a day and night the Giant kept his horrid revel. For a day and night Zim refused to listen to the prayers of the multitude, who implored him, at a thought, to destroy the Giant. For they had known the mighty little Dwarf to lift a mountain with a wire; they had seen him with his magic snap an oak like a dry reed;

and they knew that in his will was the life of the monster.

'In good time,' said Zim; 'in good time. You shall see how this evil will become goodness. You shall learn that it is nobler to reform than to destroy. What, now, if this brute mass of power, this Bakkuk, becomes a kind and gentle creature? What if he be tamed even by his own intelligence—his own affections, when duly taught, when duly touched?'

'And what will teach him?' asked the old man, who called the loudest for the Giant's death. 'What,' he repeated, 'will teach him?'

'Suffering,' answered Zim.

'Suffering! And if he comes out of the forest, and mad as he is—ay, and madder still, for his rage seems rising like a tempest—if he ravage the whole island'——

'Peace!' said Zim.

At this moment, and as if in mockery of the word, Bakkuk shouted the louder.

'You hear,' cried the old man; 'and you will not end this terror?'

'But I will end it,' said Zim.

'And how—by lightning?' asked another.

'By gentleness,' answered the mighty Dwarf; and the people murmured, for they hoped that Zim would with a spell drawn from heaven, wither up the Giant, as the fire from the cloud crumbles an oak.

And still the Giant roared and laughed. Hark! The earth groans and seems to shrink—the Giant has jumped to his feet; and now, like a whirlwind, he rushes from the forest, his face, his frame, as fiery as the setting sun that, with dropt jaw and foolish heavy eyes, he stares upon. He is become drunk, insanely drunk, with the juice of the roots of the forest; and the islanders see revealed in the Giant the truth of the legend they were born to—that whosoever lost himself in that forest would find madness.

The little people crouch and shrink away, and the Giant, stupified and half-blinded by his drink, sees them not. After a while, the islanders take courage,

and with strange curiosity observe the antics of the Giant. Now he staggers and rolls—now tumbles on the earth, and roars laughter as he falls. And now, squat, he tears the grass about him, and brings it to his leaden eyes, and tries to look at blade from blade; and then hideously simpers at his own defeat. The stars come out, and, as they tremble in their light, he winks at them, and grins to see them wink again. And now the red moon climbs the heavens; and, with a purpose in his face, the Giant turns him round, and, swaying to and fro, tries with his hands to raise himself. Gasping and groaning he at length reels upon his feet; and then, with a broken shout, throws forth his arms to tear the moon out of the sky. With a crash he tumbles again to the ground, and with stupid looks gazes in his hand; and, then, beholding the moon, he, howling, knocks his head upon the earth.

'See you not,' said Zim to the old man, 'see you not there is hope of the monster?'

'Hope! What! to see him jump at the moon? Why, 'tis like a baby!'

'Just so,' answered Zim. 'Didn't I say there was hope?'

Again the monster rose; again, with a shout, made towards the forest—again entered its shade—again dug and dug for roots; and then broke forth from his lair, and, shrieking and raving, rushed abroad; and none of the islanders—so were they appalled by his new fury—dared to follow him.

'Let him pass,' said Zim. 'This rage will spend itself. We shall hear of him.'

'Hear of him!' said the old man. 'Yes, we shall hear too much of him, when he has destroyed the island, destroyed all of us—no, not all; you are safe—you are a match for the monster; therefore, why need you care?'

'Peace, and patience,' was the only answer of Zim.

For the whole night, and at intervals throughout the next day, the islanders who remained abroad heard the

roarings of the Giant. Then came one of them with disastrous tidings: the monster had destroyed half the town, flinging aside houses with his feet as he would spurn pebbles. The multitude threatened Zim. He should instantly destroy the monster with lightning; if not——

But Zim was calm and passionless. 'Houses may be built,' said the great Dwarf; 'ignorance may be taught; but who can restore the Giant? Patience.'

The next night came, and the voice of the Giant was heard in agony; it seemed to pierce the island; and the people who had called for the destruction of the monster, now looked upon one another with mute pity in their faces.

Oh, it was terrible to hear that voice of anguish. It seemed the suffering of a very crowd of men, so loud, so various, so searching was the torture.

'And now,' said Zim, 'begins the Giant's teaching. Let those who will, follow me to the monster's haunt, even to his very presence.'

'What, to be torn to bits?' asked the old doubter. 'No; you may go, for, as I've said, you are safe.'

Zim, with a smile, prepared to depart, when numbers crowded about him, praying him not to attempt the danger; but Zim, with cheerful looks and hopeful words, smiled on their counsel, saying, 'The time for the teacher is come.' He then turned upon his way, and was followed by a few.

Pursuing the sound, that, with every footstep, became louder and sharper, as though torn from writhing torture, Zim and his followers reached the entrance of a cave, that now with the groans of the monster echoed with awful misery.

But yesterday there was the power of an army in that huge carcase, and now it lay helpless, almost motionless, as a stone, save that now and then the flesh wrinkled with agony; the giant's chest roared like a roaring crater, and his teeth clashed and clanged together. That monster was bound helpless as a swathed infant in the bonds of pain.

'You see,' said Zim, 'his fevered body smitten with the night air and night dews.'

'Plain,' broke in the old doubter, who, even unwillingly, had been drawn thither by his curiosity; 'plain; I see the symptoms. Even giants can't stand against rheumatism.'

'Even so,' replied Zim. 'And now begins the Giant's schooling.'

'Schooling,' cried the old man; 'the doctor first, I should say, before the schoolmaster.'

'They shall both work together,' answered Zim; and, entering the cave, he sat down at the end of the Giant's right hand. With a roar, the Giant clutched the Dwarf, and Zim's companions, screaming, fled. It was but for a moment; a spasm of agony shot through the Giant's arm, and the Doctor Dwarf stood on his feet, unbruised, unhurt.

Zim called out to his companions, who made no answer: he then went out of the cave to satisfy them, lest they should go back to the people with a false story of his death. When they saw him come from the cave, they ran to him, and besought him not to persevere in his mad intent: his life would be cast away upon the Giant.

'Kill the monster! kill him!' cried all the people.

'Teach him! teach him!' answered Zim, with a smile; and again he turned to re-enter the cave, and again the people crowded about him, beseeching him.

'The lightning! the lightning!' they said. 'No teacher like the lightning. That is the readiest means. Kill the monster where he lies, and let the cave be his burying-place.'

'Why that would be the easiest way,' said Zim.

'The easiest, and the best,' answered the people. 'Hurrah, Zim! you'll kill him.'

'I think not,' answered the Doctor, with a humorous look. 'No, I think I'll teach him.'

'Teach him! And with what?' asked the old doubter, with a sneer.

'With this, for one thing,' said the Doctor Dwarf;

and, at the word, he plucked a wild flower growing at the mouth of the cave, and then motioning farewell to the people, passed in to his Giant patient.

CHAPTER IV

Cautiously and tenderly did Zim approach the sufferer, whose every nerve in its agony was as a burning chain upon him. The Giant could not move a finger, that the motion was not punished by a torment; and so he lay motionless; now piteously groaning, and now with flashing and malignant eyes mowing and jabbering at the Dwarf Doctor, who, with a benignant smile, began to move more confidently around the monstrous bulk of flesh, Bakkuk still following the motions of Zim with hateful glances. Twice or thrice Bakkuk strove to snatch at his benefactor, and every time yelled with pain, and every time yielded to the chastising master. And so the Giant became worn down and passive; and, by degrees, the cannibal fierceness that fired his eyeballs grew dim and was quenched; and, at length, with a dull, filmy glaze, the monster scarcely seemed to note the motions of his benefactor.

Zim's small fingers lay upon the Giant's pulse, that knocked hard and fiery. There lay the huge, pain-stricken heap of flesh, with no more reason to comprehend the agony that tore it than has Ætna of the fire within its entrails. There it lay; and there, in the face of that little speck, the Doctor Dwarf, shone the serene might of intelligence—the soft and steady ray of knowledge.

Zim quitted the cave, and taking with him certain of the islanders, who still lingered at a distance without, to assist him in the search, journeyed a short distance to gather herbs. These were plucked and brought in vast heaps to the mouth of the cave; and some were bruised, and the juices strained, and some Zim brought whole to the Giant. With these plants the Doctor covered the burning body of his patient; and, in sooth, it was

no light work for one small pair of hands, for, although Zim entreated partnership of aid from his fellows, they all, through fear, refused it—it was, we say, no holiday task for one such dwarf as Zim to cover so huge a frame as the Giant's, from his breast to the soles of his feet. Nevertheless, this Zim after some hours accomplished: and there lay Bakkuk, the Giant, all save his face and head, green as a grassy hill in June, covered, clothed with the medicinal herbs prescribed and administered by the Dwarf Doctor.

And it was beautiful to see—and Zim's heart opened and melted at the sight—the eyes of the Giant. For as the delicious coolness of the herbs allayed the malice of the fever, as their healing beneficence carried health into every pore, quenching the fire of the disease, it was beautiful to see the looks of the Giant; looks that erstwhile were lurid and savage as the sun that sets with threat of tempest—looks that now were filled with the soft, mild gladness of a dawning May. Fuller and fuller the light shone in them—shone with new consciousness, with deeper and deeper intelligence. The heart of the Doctor Dwarf leapt within him; and, having filled a large gourd, thrice the size of his own head—so big, so heavy, he staggered with it—filled it to the brim with the juice of herbs, he clambered up the Giant, toiling his weary way until he reached his chest; and there, panting from his labour, there stood the little Doctor, with his medicine under the brow of the giant's chin. How the islanders—for a few of the boldest had, one by one, edged into the cave—how they marvelled at the bold perseverance of Zim; and how, with a scream, they rushed back from the cave, when they beheld the giant drop his jaw, and show his terrible teeth! But Zim was stout of heart, and saw in the Giant's eyes that the Giant had a dawning sense of the further good prepared for him; and, so believing, accommodated his vast mouth to the puny endeavours of the Doctor. With much trouble, Zim emptied the gourd into the mouth of the Giant, who, with milder looks, and in his only manner, grunted thanks. Again and again did

Zim perform his journey up the Giant's frame; again and again drenched his monster patient.

And for three days and nights Zim tended and watched the sick Giant; and for three days and nights beheld the countenance of the monster change from brute ferocity to passive gentleness. On the morning of the fourth day the fever was wholly subdued; and, as the early breeze from the sea blew into the cave, the breast of the giant seemed labouring with a new emotion; his bosom gently heaved and heaved, as broad and gentle as the distant wave. And then his eyes grew softer and softer, and at length melted into floods of thanksgiving tears.

And Zim knelt beside the Giant—knelt, and himself gave thanks for the precious bounty, the teaching beneficence, of such tears; for he knew that they came from the Giant's heart. Grateful Nature had smitten the stone, and it gushed forth healing water.

And then the little island folk began to crowd into the den, the news of the change in the Giant having passed from mouth to mouth. And the Giant turned his looks upon them; and his former sullen, rugged face was softened and refined by smiles. And the islanders, wondering at the marvel, uttered prayers and gave praises to Zim. Now, who so great as Zim—the good Zim—the mighty Zim?

And days pass by, and every day brings strength and gentleness to the Giant; and every day takes with it some savage trace, some harsh and angry line. The storm of brutal passions that had darkened the features of Bakkuk was gradually dispelled, and simple goodness dawned throughout. Long and painful was the labour of the Doctor Dwarf, resolved to teach the Giant; who, from signs, grew into the use and knowledge of articulate sounds; and still his outward aspect became softer, gentler, with every acquitted task.

When Bakkuk had sufficiently mastered words whereby to attempt a revelation of his thoughts, Zim sought to know the Giant's history. How came he on the island? Where had he dwelt before? What his con-

dition ? And then Bakkuk would press his head with his hands ; and, for awhile, pore dreamily upon the ground ; then cast disordered looks into the heavens ; then throw apart his arms, as though despairingly he would scatter the clouds that darkened him. No ; he remembered nothing—nothing distinct. He would smile, and clap his hands at the murmur of the sea. And when Zim made the Giant place a shell to his ear, he listened and listened, and smiles crept over his face ; and his eyes softened at the sound ; and then he placed the shell at his heart, as though it spoke to that.

But the wonder of Bakkuk—his marvel of marvels—was a little child. He would hold his breath with awe, when Zim brought him his little son, that would stand in the Giant's palm, and laugh up in his huge face, softened into reverence and love. And Bakkuk would compare the child's arm with his own ; compare finger with finger ; and then laugh, and then look sad ; and then new affection for the little one would gleam in the Giant's eyes. Then again and again he would wish to throw himself upon the earth, that he might worship Zim ; who ever reproved the Giant, teaching him by his own motion to look into the heavens and pray.

For many months Bakkuk remained in the cave, and was fed by the labour of the islanders, who—so willingly were they guided by the counsels of Zim—cheerfully worked for the savage ; nay, sometimes stinted themselves, that Bakkuk might have his mighty fill. And still Zim taught his pupil, every week advancing : taught him the frame of the globe ; its bones of rock and stone —its flesh of earth—its outward verdure. So taught him the beautiful mystery of a flower, that the Giant would look upon the simplest bud with all the awe and reverence that the savage brings to the foulest idol : taught him the fabric of the heavens, with the rising and the setting of the sun ; taught him to know the stars as they came glittering forth ; taught him to know the motion of the moon as she swam into the firmament.

And every lesson, we say, brought its added light, that, from the mind of the Giant, shone in his face, and

gave to him the beauty of love and gentleness. And Bakkuk learned to know the wonders about him as only the shadows of a greater wonder—learned to listen to the beating of his heart only as an instrument whose every throb told of a nearer and a nearer world.

CHAPTER V

Love—love for his teacher was of daily growth in the heart of the Giant. And great was the joy of Zim when he beheld his patient, controlled by the grateful impulse, cast himself upon his knees, and heard him utter prayers for his preserver; heard the poor, enfranchised monster pour forth thanksgiving for the blessings of his redemption. With every touch of truth, of knowledge, Bakkuk had received a ray of light, a look of gentleness; and when at length he stood before the assembled people—what a holiday was that time of triumph!—his face was beautiful in its mingled look of power and peace; and his every word, a word of gratitude—of love. He, who, with brute license, had raged throughout the island, now moved in it as in a temple; his wonder, his affection raised and wrought upon by every sight and every sound. To him the smallest flower was a precious thing; for he had been taught to see in it a part of the great mystery that shines in the stars: to him the sea-shell gave the self-same music as the unfathomable deep; sweeter, softer, but the same. And with his mind thus taught and dignified, it was beautiful to mark the gentleness with which the Giant bore himself towards the little people of the island. It seemed that he had lost all sense of his surpassing bulk and strength, in humility and thankfulness towards his benefactors.

After a time, Zim led the Giant to the spot where, in his ignorance, he had thrown down houses and temples. When Bakkuk saw the ruins he blushed; and then begged to be taught, that night and day he might labour to restore them.

'In good time,' said Zim, and then led him to the forest.

'It was here,' said the Dwarf, 'here that you sought the means of madness.' And then, to the questions of the Giant, Zim recounted the story of Bakkuk's frenzy.

'Now, then,' said the Giant, 'let me pay recompense. Give me this place: let me labour here.'

'It is an evil place,' said Zim; 'all men shun it: a place whose shadows are as griefs—whose dews are as misery.'

'Give it me,' cried the Giant. 'You shall teach, and I will work.'

'Be it so,' said Zim. 'I can answer for the people; do what you will.'

Next morning, at sunrise, the Giant went forth to work in the forest. Before the sun had set, he had plucked up every tree, piling them in many a heap. Then he set fire to the piles; and for days and days tended the flames, fanning them as they failed, and feeding them with new offerings. At length, that ill-boding forest lay in so much dust upon the earth—the ground scathed and mortified by fire. Great was the rejoicing of the islanders, when they beheld the sun fall upon the earth so late deformed and blotted by that fatal wood.

The Giant's next task was to till the land. That land, redeemed from evil, should be his first offering to his benefactors. Corn should grow there, and his heart would rejoice and melt at the harvest. And so, indeed, it happened. Bakkuk, instructed by Zim, laboured early and late; and—how quick the seasons passed!—many a broad acre was covered with golden corn; corn of larger, fuller growth, than heretofore had flourished in the island. The Giant's harvest-home was, indeed, a holiday, and its memory held in celebration for many an age.

'Better to teach than to kill,' said Zim, quietly, to the ancient doubter; as the Dwarf pointed to the large shocks of wheat sown, reaped, and piled by Bakkuk.

But there was no part of the island that did not bear some mark of the Giant's zeal and gratitude.

'We must have a star-tower,' said Zim; 'a mighty pile, from whose top we may the better survey the heavens.'

And Bakkuk quarried the marble, and carried the blocks; and, with his mighty force, laid stone upon stone, the brain of little Zim teaching and directing him. And when the tower was completed, Zim ascended to the top, taking with him the old sceptic. And as the stars trembled close above their heads, raining down looks of peace and love, the doubter said —'Beautiful, beautiful stars! I could not have thought ye so glorious and so lovely.'

And Zim replied, 'You owe the knowledge to Bakkuk: without his help, this sight, in the fullness of its magnificence, had been denied you. Brother, I ask again, is it not better to teach than to kill?'

And thus the labours of the Giant filled the island with blessings; and the Giant was blessed in the reward of his labours—in the wages of respect and love he enjoyed of his masters. They taught him the true dignity of life; and, whilst he ministered to their higher delights, they repaid him with gentleness and affection.

And at length, old, and very old, the Giant could no longer labour. His hair became as snow, and the light died in his eyes; and the old blind Giant was loved and cherished for the bygone days of his strength. He was, in his very helplessness, reverenced as the monument of departed vigour.

At length, Bakkuk, the Giant, died. He died upon a hill, beneath the open sky, feeling, he said, though he saw them not, the stars upon his face.

And where Bakkuk was buried there grew a mighty banyan-tree—a tree in which the fancies of after-generations would see and trace the bones and sinews of the Giant; a tree that would give shelter and food to thousands. And, it is said, never did man seek the hospitality of its shade, or the nourishment of its fruit, that he did not bless the memory of the good Giant, that he did not think with love and tenderness upon the Doctor Dwarf.

THE LAMP-POST

A HOUSEHOLD NARRATIVE

PARACELSUS, we are told, extracted the finest essences from the unseemliest compounds. The moral chemist may work out a truth even from a lamp-post.

In a suburb terrace, which we care not to name, the inhabitants dwelt in darkness. To them gas was as great a mystery as the fire of Prometheus. However, a wise man, living at Number Seven—there were thirteen houses in the row, which, far removed from the main-road, displayed a most picturesque air of gloom and solitude—proposed the innovation of a lamp-post. Strange to say, escaping the fate of many innovators, Number Seven was neither stoned, nor torn to pieces, nor even banished the neighbourhood. Far happier than Doctor Faustus, far more fortunate in his time than Cornelius Agrippa, Number Seven, even though, like the said Cornelius, he kept a large black dog, was hailed as a public benefactor—a man illumined for the special good of his fellows. A lamp had long been necessary to the advancing comfort and civilization of —— Terrace ; many and grievous were the results of miry paths and dark nights. In the last fog, Number Four, a fat elder, had bared his shin-bone against the scraper of Number Five ; and Number Eight, an antique, but timid spinster, had sprained her ankle, and broken the rest of Number Nine's pigs, by suddenly intruding upon them sleeping, as in the good old pastoral times, in near proximity to the habitation of their master. We might, but we will not, fill pages with a gloomy narrative of casualties, never again to be repeated in consequence of the promised new light.

When Number Seven proposed his remedy of the lamp, had he presented to each of his neighbours the

lamp of Aladdin, he could not have met with a heartier welcome; could not have had praises, thanksgivings, eulogies, more flattering to his self-esteem, more honourable to the obliged and the obliging. Number One acquiesced with a cordial grip; Number Two thwacked him on the shoulders, and vowed to swear for ever by him; Number Three was in a flutter of gratitude; Number Four pointed to his broken shin with a look of re-assured hope; and Number Eight, with a half-suppressed shudder at the pigs, dropped at least two tears of thankful emotion. In fact, from Number One to Number Twelve, nothing was to be heard but the praises of Number Seven. Thus far all was happiness and self-congratulation! Would that the medal had no reverse. Number Seven had, indeed, escaped the burst of indignation which hath a thousand times overwhelmed the innovator in his first rash advances; but he was to take his place with the Columbuses, in after suffering.

The expenses of the lamp-post, lamp, and lighting were duly calculated; and no less minutely divided into thirteen parts. The whole transaction had been effected by Number Seven with the most scrupulous economy; and, as it happens with even greater benefits than a lamp and a lamp-post, when the sum to be borne by each party was arithmetically proved, it caused a general wonder, sent one thrill of amazement, mixed with a touch of shame, throughout the whole row, to think how so much darkness might be dissipated at so little expense. Alas! we now approach the fatal point of our history. The lamp in the imagination of the subscribers was scarcely lighted, ere the poisonous breath of envy blew it out. Then commenced the war of words, the bitter taunt, the false attack, the uncharitable interpretation; there was but one cry from Number One to Number Thirteen, and that was—*Guerre à la lanterne!*

And why, asks the reader, wherefore this turmoil? Why such hatred, envy, and uncharitableness about a lamp-post? We will answer.

We have said everything was prepared for the reception of the new light—when the question arose touching the place where that light should burn. Number Four had lately lost his knocker, and wished the lamp-post before his door, as the best protection from thieves. Number Five, a very pious person, with the largest prayer-book in the parish congregation, loudly complained of the injustice; the proper place for the lamp was immediately before her parlour-window; and for thieves, Number Four should put his trust in a good conscience, and buy a pair of pistols. Number Nine lifted up her eyes, and wondered at people's impudence; she, even on the score of character and morals, had the clearest right to the lamp, as she could then best detect the suspected visits of the journeyman-baker to her maid-servants. Now raged the war, Twelve Numbers claiming a distinct right to the benefit of the lamp-post. At length, after much confusion, the whole twelve agreed to appeal to Number Seven, who, in all this clamour, had kept a silence—a mournful silence. However, being by general acclaim made the arbiter of the question, he proceeded to decide it according to the square.

'It is clear,' said Number Seven, 'that there are thirteen houses; it is clear that each of the thirteen bears a proportionate part of the cost—it is no less clear, that as the lamp-post cannot be at the door of each of the thirteen, it should be placed whence it can best diffuse its benefits to all. And how can it more perfectly do this, than when fixed in the centre, in, I may say (and he looked at Number Five), the midst of the tabernacle? Now, good friends, there are thirteen houses, which is the middle number?'

'Number Seven!' was the general shout.

'It is—I have judged,' said Number Seven.

'What! the lamp-post at your house?' And the whole Number Twelve were unanimous in their revilings and tauntings of Number Seven, charging him with every iniquity beneath the sun. They lost all view of the truth of his judgment, of the wisdom conveyed in

it, in indignation of his accidental position; they confounded his honesty with the benefit which was inevitably to arise from it, and they called it mean, designing selfishness; the truth of figures was as nothing to the indulgence of a prejudice.

What was the result? This: no lamp-post is to this day erected. Broken shins, sprained ankles, lost knockers, and falling over pigs, continue to be endured by the whole Number Twelve, who vow they will suffer all this and more—will live and die in darkness, for this very excellent, and no less general reason—they will not succumb to the truth of Number Seven; because their neighbour would be, as they think, beyond themselves, the accidental gainer by it.

How many of our most grievous social quarrels are about the position of the lamp-post?

'The art of life consists in not being overset by trifles. We should look at the bottom of the account, not at each individual item in it, and see how the balance stands at the end of the year. We should be satisfied if the path of life is clear before us, and not fret at the straws or pebbles that lie in our way. The impertinence of mankind is a thing that no one can guard against.'—Sir Joshua Reynolds.

RECOLLECTIONS OF GUY FAWKES

'When a man has once been very famous for jests and merry adventures, he is made to adopt all the jests that want a father, and many times such as are unworthy of him.'—MOTTEUX'S *Life of Rabelais.*

AT midnight, on the fifth of November, in the year of grace one thousand six hundred and five, Guido Fawkes, 'gentleman,' was discovered, 'booted and spurred,' in the vicinity of St. Stephen's Chapel, having on his person 'three matches, a tinder-box, and a dark lantern'; and purposing by means of gunpowder to blow up, says King James, 'the whole nobility, the most part of the knights and gentry, besides the whole judges of the land, with *most of the lawyers* and the whole clerks!' For this one indiscretion Guido Fawkes forfeited his gentility, and became a proverb of wickedness. In boyhood we looked upon Guido Fawkes, gentleman, as one little lower than the devil; he had four horns, and a dozen tails. 'Years that bring the philosophic mind' have divested him of these excrescences and appendages, and Guido Fawkes now appears to matured charities merely a person of a singularly eccentric disposition.

Some five and twenty years ago it was the patriotic custom of the authorities of an Isle of Sheppey dockyard to bestow upon their apprentices a few waggon-loads of resinous timber, that a bonfire worthy of the cause it celebrated might be kindled from the public purse—that the effigy of the arch-fiend Guy might be consumed in a fire three times hotter than the fire of a furnace. Such fierce liberality was not lost upon the townspeople; their ardour in the burning business

smouldered not; every man subscribed his plank or log; and, from the commissioner in his uniform, to Bobby in his pinafore, the fifth of November glowed, in the calendar of their minds, a pillar of fire. For a month before that day, the coming anniversary busied the thoughts of boyish executioners, resolved to show their patriotism in the appointments of the Guy—in the grotesque iniquity of his face—in the cumbrous state of his huge arm-chair. To beg clothes from door to door was the business of every lover of Church and State. To ask for a coat—a pair of breeches—a shirt (the frill could be made of paper)—hose and hat, was not mendicity, but the fulfilment of a high social duty.

Guy Fawkes would at length be dressed. A philosopher might have found good matter in his eleemosynary suit. In the coat of the blood-thirsty wretch he might have recognised the habit of Seum, the slop-seller, a quiet trader afloat of twenty thousand pounds—in the vest of the villainous ruffian the discarded waistcoat of Smallgrog, the honest landlord of a little house for sailors—in the stockings of the atrocious miscreant the hose of the equitable Weevil, biscuit contractor to his Majesty's fleet—whilst for the leather of the fiend-like effigy, Guy Fawkes was to be exhibited, and afterwards burnt in, the broad-toed shoes of that best of men, Trap, the town attorney.

The chair, too, in which Guy Fawkes sat, might it not have some day enshrined a justice of the peace? and the lantern fixed in the hand of the diabolical, lynx-eyed monster, might it not have been the property of the most amiable and most somnolent of all the Blue Town watchmen? A mask was fixed upon the effigy, or the lump of clay kneaded into human features, and horribly or delicately expressed, according to the benevolent art of the makers!—might not the same visor have been worn by a perfect gentleman, with considerable advantage, at a masquerade?—might not the clay nose and mouth of the loathsome traitor have borne an accidental likeness to the very pink of patriots? Let philosophy ponder well on Guy Fawkes.

We will now attempt our childish recollections of the great Guy. We have waked at midnight, perhaps dreaming of the bonfire about to blaze, and thinking we heard the distant chorus sounding to the advent of the Mighty Terror. No, it was the sea booming across the marsh, the wind rising or falling. There was nothing for it but to go to sleep and dream of unextinguishable squibs and crackers. At length four o'clock arrives ; the cocks crow—the boys can't be long now. There—hark !—how the chant comes up the street, like one voice—the voice of a solitary droning witch ! We lie breathless, and shape to ourselves Guy Fawkes in the dark ! Our hearts beat quicker and quicker as the chant becomes louder ; and we sit up in bed, as the boys approach the door, and, oh ! how we wish to be with them ! There—there they are in full chorus ! Hark :—

> The fifth of November, as I can remember,
> Is gunpowder treason and plot ;
> I know no reason, why gunpowder treason
> Should ever be forgot.

We feel an unutterable pang, for, loudest among the loud, we hear the shrill voice of Jack Tarleton. ' Ha ! ' we sigh, ' *his* mother lets *him* out.' The bitterness passes away with the—

> Hallo, boys ! hallo, boys ! make a round ring,
> Hallo, boys ! hallo, boys ! God save the king !

And now the procession moves on, and the voices die in the distance, and we feel we are left alone ; and, in a few minutes, we hear new revellers, rejoicing in the captivity of a suit of clothes stuffed with hay, and called Guy Fawkes. Guy Fawkes ! Guy Fawkes ! who —what *is* Guy Fawkes ? We had been told that he had been caught with a lantern, tinder-box and matches, ready to blow up thousands of barrels of gunpowder, and so to destroy the king, bishops, and members of Parliament. It must be shocking—very shocking ; still, we could not perfectly envisage the atrocity—we could not make out the full horror. We had the undefined

sense of the greatness of a king, though we hardly dared to hope we should ever see one. We had a less remote notion of the nature of a bishop, having been helped somewhat in our speculations by the person of the curate at the garrison church. 'Curates may come to be bishops, only bishops are very much greater; and curates have nothing upon their heads, whereas certain bishops might wear mitres.' On learning this we thought that bishops were merely full-grown curates; in the same way that we had seen Poland hens with their topknots of feathers only the spring before bare-headed little chicks. It was thus, in the irreverence of childhood, we disposed of the whole bench of bishops. But now came we to the difficulty—what, what could be a member of Parliament? Was it a living thing? If so, had it a voice? Could it speak? Could it sit? Could it say yes and no? Could it walk? Could it turn? Or was it merely an image? Was it pulled by wires, like sister Jenny's doll? We had been told that members of Parliament made laws. What *were* laws? Were they the lions and unicorns on the king's arms? Were they a better sort of cake, too dear for everybody to buy? Little boys ate parliament cakes—were law-cakes for men? If so, were they gilt or plain?—with comfits or without?

It is no matter, we thought, being unable to satisfy ourselves: it is no matter. Guy Fawkes—that shadowy, terrible mystery—had once lived and tried to kill the king, the full-grown curates, and those undivined riddles—members of Parliament. We again went to our first question. What *was* Guy Fawkes? Did he have a father and a mother? Was Guy Fawkes ever a little boy? and did he fly a kite and play at marbles? If so, how could he have ever thought it worth his while to trouble himself with other matters? There was something terrifying in the idea of having played with Guy Fawkes. We fancied him at taw—we saw him *knuckle down*. No—it could not be; the imagination of the child could not dwell upon such an impossibility. Guy Fawkes a boy!—a baby! now

shaking a rattle—now murmuring as he fed, his mother smiling down upon him! No, no—it was impossible; Guy Fawkes was never born—he was from the first a man—he never could have been a baby. He seemed to us a part of the things that had always been, and always would be—a piece of grim eternity; a principle of everlasting wickedness.

Is it in childhood alone—is it only in the dim imaginings of infancy—in the wandering guesses of babyhood, that we manifest this ignorance? When the full-grown thief is hanged, do we not sometimes forget that he was the child of misery and vice—born for the gallows—nursed for the halter? Did we legislate a little more for the cradle, might we not be spared some pains for the hulks?

And then we had been told that Guy Fawkes came from Spain. Where was Spain? Was it a million miles away, and what distance was a million miles? Were there little boys in Spain, or were they all like Guy Fawkes? How strange, and yet how delightful to us did it seem to feel that we were a part of the wonderful things about us! To be at all upon this world—to be one at the great *show* of men and women—to feel that when we grew bigger we should know everything of kings, bishops, members of Parliament, and Guy Fawkes! What a golden glory hung about the undiscovered!

And Guy Fawkes, we had heard, had his head cut off, and his body cut into quarters! Could this be true? Could men do to men what we had seen Fulk the butcher do to sheep? How much, we thought, had little boys to grow out of before they could agree to this! And then, when done, what was the good of it—what *could* be the good of it? Was Guy Fawkes eaten—if not, *why* cut him up?

Had Guy Fawkes a wife, and little boys and girls? Did he love his children, and buy them toys and apples—or, like Sawney Bean, did he devour them? Did Guy Fawkes say his prayers?

Had Guy Fawkes a friend? Did he ever laugh—did

he ever tell a droll story ? Did Guy Fawkes ever sing a song ? Like Frampton, the Blue Town Barber, did Guy Fawkes ever get drunk ? At length we put to ourselves the question of questions :—

Was there ever such a man as Guy Fawkes ? Did Guy Fawkes ever live ?

This query annoyed us with the doubt that we had been tricked into a hate, a fear, a loathing, a wonder—and a mixture of these passions and emotions, for a fib. We felt disappointed when we felt the reality of Guy Fawkes to be doubtful. We had heard of griffins and unicorns, of dragons that had eaten men like apples, and had then been told that there never had been any such thing. If we were not to believe in a dragon, why should we believe in Guy Fawkes ? After all, was the whole story but make-game ?

The child passively accepts a story of the future, he can bring his mind up to a thing promised, but wants faith in the past. The cause is obvious ; he recollects few things gone, but is full of things to come. Hence Guy Fawkes was with us the ogre of a nursery ; we could have readily believed, especially after the Story of Beauty and the Beast, that he married Goody Two Shoes, and was the father of Little Red Riding Hood.

But Guy Fawkes grows with us from boyhood to youth. He gets flesh and blood with every November ; he is no longer the stuffed plaything of a schoolboy or the grotesque excuse for begging vagabonds, but the veritable Guy Fawkes, ' gentleman.' We see him, ' Thomas Percy's alleged man,' at the door of the vault, ' booted and spurred ' ; we behold that ' very tall and desperate fellow,' lurking in the deep of night, with looks of deadly resolution, pounced upon by that vigilant gentleman of the privy-chamber, Sir Thomas Knevit ! We go with Guido, ' the new Mutius Scævola, born in England,' before the council, where ' he often smiles in scornful manner, not only avowing the fact, but repenting only, with the said Scævola, his failing in the execution thereof.' We think of him ' answering quickly to every man's objection, scoffing at any idle

questions which were propounded to him, and jesting with such as he thought had no authority to examine him.' And then we think of the thanksgiving of the great James, who gave praise that, had the intent of the wicked prevailed, he should not have 'died ingloriously in an ale-house, a stew, or such vile place,' but with 'the best and most honourable company.' [1]

Guy Fawkes is, in our baby thoughts, a mysterious vision, one of the shadows of evil advancing on the path of childhood. We grow older, and the substances of evil come close upon us—we see their dark lantern, and snuff the brimstone.

[1] See 'His Majesty's Speech concerning the Gunpowder Plot,' &c., in the *Harleian Miscellany*.

SOLOMON'S APE

'For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.'—*Kings.*

A LEARNED rabbi, Ben Eli, has filled three thick MS. folios with the adventures of a certain ape, a sojourner at the court of the wisest of kings. Though the work has hitherto been withheld from the world, it seems not unlikely that it has long been the acknowledged model of many biographies. We conceive there is internal evidence in the history of thousands of courtiers, that the writers were aware how much the erudite Ben Eli could make of an ape. They who have gravely registered the slightest formality, the most evanescent word or gesture of certain heroes, must have had in their memory the first chronicler of monkey tricks. There was a time when it would have been the simplest and safest course to publish the entire folio: in former days, readers were like hogs, whose master had the right of pannage: they were turned into the literary forest to root, and grub up, and become as fat as they might. Now, it is not enough to show them the tree of knowledge; but it is compulsory on those who drive the 'dreadful trade,' to clamber the branches, and gather the fruit. Nay, and when gathered, the apple serves not the epicure of our day, if it be not carefully pared and sliced; and, in some instances, presented on a fork of standard gold or silver. Moreover, cases have happened wherein the quality of the fork hath been cavilled for, more than that of the apple: thus, an embossed implement hath at times passed off a sorry crab. Once it was enough for wisdom to point out the

wood where grew the nuts: now must she gather and crack them.

Thus much by way of feeble apology for the licence we have taken with the folios of the venerable Ben Eli. We have wandered through their forest of leaves; we have picked all we could lay our hands upon; we have torn away the husk—have broken the shell—and for the few kernels—gentle feeder, some of them are before you.

'And the ape became a favourite with the servants of Solomon. And the women smiled upon him, and the men laughed at his grimace; and the ape was puffed with pride, and became a proverb to the wise. And the ape forgot the mother that bore him, and the father that begat him, and the wood which, in the days of his youth, did give him shadow. And—brief be the words—the ape forgot he was an ape.

'There was a strange woman in the court of King Solomon. She was beautiful as light; and many men did try for the love of the strange woman; for she was a princess in her own country.

'And it fell, that the woman looked from her window, and beheld in the court below the ape stretched, sleeping in the sun: for it was high noon, and there was silence on all things. But in the heart of the strange woman there was no peace, for she thought of her father's tents.

'And the ape awoke, and, looking upward, beheld the strange woman. And there was vanity in his heart, and he still looked upward. And the captive woman had compassion on the creature, and, believing that he hungered, cast him down a ripe pomegranate. And the ape did eat the pomegranate, and did lick his lips, and did say in his heart, "Of a truth, the strange woman doth love me."

'And the next day, at the same hour, the ape watched under the window of the strange woman, and again she did throw him the fruit, which he did eat, and again did cry, "Nay, it is certain she doth love me."

'And the same thing came to pass on the third and fourth day.

'And in the stillness of the fifth day, when sleep lay upon the lids of the household, the ape did clamber the wall which did shut in the strange woman. And as he clomb, a voice still cried in his heart, "She doth love me."

'And the ape clambered up to the window of the strange woman; and when she saw the monster, she filled the chamber with her screams, and shrieked for help. And the servants of the chamber came to her aid; and the court was filled with a multitude.

'And the woman entreated to be saved from the ape; but the ape understood not her words, for still he said to himself, "She doth love me."

'And the men took staves, and did beat and bruise the ape, but the ape was not convinced; for yet he said, "It is plain she doth love me." And the ape fell wounded into the court beneath.

'And when they inquired of the matter, the woman said, "I thought the ape did hunger, and I took compassion on his misery, and threw to him a pomegranate."

'Then a wise man said to the woman—"Daughter, let not beauty give gifts unto fools; for out of the kindness of her heart do they misinterpret; and in the very offerings of her compassion do they breed an ill report."

'And even as the wise man said these things, the ape lay in the court beneath, and did lick his sore, and did blow the pouches of his cheeks, and cried, "It is manifest, the strange woman doth love me."

'There were two jugglers in the train of the Queen of Sheba. And they played, each with a serpent, before King Solomon.

'Now the queen sought to prove the knowledge of the king, and said,—"Oh, Solomon, thou who hast spoken of trees, from the cedar to the hyssop—also of beasts, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes;

'"Declare unto thy servant, which of the two is the

true serpent (for one was cunningly fashioned like unto a living snake, and did move and writhe in the hands of the juggler); for, of a truth, there is but one of the two that hath life."

'And the jugglers played with the snakes before the seat of King Solomon.

'Then the king did privily send for the ape; and when he was brought in, the king caused him to be led near unto the jugglers.

'And the ape passed one of the men who played with a snake, and took no note thereof; but as he approached the fellow who held the second snake, the ape did shake, and his hair did rise upon his skin, and he trembled exceedingly; wherefore King Solomon discovered the true snake, and all men praised the wisdom of the king.[1]

'Now the ape discovered that he had been made the judge between the true and the false snake, and his head did swell with the shouting, and he was puffed up with vain glory.

'And after some days a multitude stood before the judgment porch. And a strife had arisen between two carvers—skilful workmen were they both.

'Palm-trees, and open flowers, and every manner of curious carving had they carved.

'And they both claimed certain carvings of cherubim. And when they had spoken and called their witnesses, King Solomon paused to consider before he delivered judgment.

'It so chanced that the ape had crept among the multitude, and had listened to the story of the carvers; and when he saw the king pause, he said to himself, "Solomon is perplexed."

'And the ape brake through the multitude, and ran to the porch, and did motion that he would judge between the carvers.

'And the ape did leap upon the shoulders of the one, and did caress him; but at the other he did scream,

[1] See Rabbinical stories for a parallel case.

and grind his teeth. And Solomon understood the folly of the ape, and cried :—

'"It is ever so with the fool. Allow him the wisdom that perceiveth and shunneth a serpent, and straightway he will believe he hath understanding to judge even between the cherubim." '

At present we must end our extracts from the pages of Ben Eli ; though we cannot close without appending the final reflection of the learned rabbi, who, having narrated a thousand other instances of the folly of the ape—how he pilfered from the treasury, how he stole jewels to hang about him, and how he plucked bare divers peacocks to make himself a glory from their plumes, observes :—

'*An ape will ever be an ape, though compassed with gold, and silver, and ivory, and though his dwelling-place be even the court of King Solomon.*'

THE OLD BOATMAN

'I HAD the legend from a gray-haired captain, who had it from his grandfather.'

'And we have two hours good of the watch; tell the tale—tell it, and stint no word. Peace, Jabez! and Miguel will tell us of the thing last night.'

'What thing?'

'Why, the thing that hailed us last night.'

'I would I had seen it,' cried Jabez, with an incredulous sneer.

'Thou wert asleep, fast as a tortoise.'

'Ha! ha! ha! and we need not sleep to dream, eh, shipmates?'

'By the blessed Virgin, there were twenty of us who heard it—saw it.'

'Peace, peace, Jabez! thou hast no more religion than a dog-fish,' spake another.

'And I,' said he who was urged to tell the tale, 'have been an unbeliever. Until last night I would have laughed with Jabez: but now—Christ be with us! what is that?'

A low, long groan, as from a dying creature, came through the air. The sailors, rugged as they were, huddled closer together, and looked anxiously in each other's faces. Again the groan was heard.

'Ha! ha!' laughed Jabez, 'is't a mermaid's song, that you look so white at it? Did ye never before hear black flesh bellow in the hold of the Santa Maria? 'Tis the woman whose husband we gave to the white shark this morning. So, since it must be, let us have your story, Miguel. But stay; first, what was this grandfather with whom the tale began?'

'As ourselves—a sailor.'

'And carried the like cargo?'

'Of the same hell-born traffic. Thou mayest gaze,

Jabez ; I pray the Virgin I was once more on Christian earth ! Well ; he had been forty years a sailor, when he heard and beheld the thing we last night heard and looked upon. He came home, discharged his crew, gave his vessel to the flames, and died a holy brother of St. Francis. Thou shalt have the legend in his very words.'

'Now, Miguel—now.'

'Ay, thou shalt have the legend in his very words.'

'Sold ! all sold ! Now will I hie me home, live at mine ease, hang a lamp of silver at the shrine of St. Francis, and when I die—pah !—death is many a mile away from the wealthy Pedro. Fellow ! yonder ! '

Thus ruminated, thus spake Pedro Xibecq, as he stepped from the beach into a skiff, and pointed out to the boatman a fine, trim-built vessel in the bay.

Pedro might well triumph : he had made his last voyage—bore about him a heavy weight of wealth, the produce of his freight—some ten score healthy blacks. 'They are snatched from their heathen idols, and will be blest with the true faith.' Thus thought Pedro ; and, with the thought, he laid his hand upon the bag of gold. And as the boat glided silently along, bright visions gladdened the eyes of Pedro. He saw a palace thronged with menials in his many-coloured livery—gardens, radiant as paradise, lakes of rippling silver. Enchanting music stole into his ears, and his heart rose, beating to the sound. Pedro smiled, and again he pressed his hand upon his gold. 'This glory, this greatness, will be mine—long as I live, mine—and when I die, ha ! ha ! again death—tut ! death is many hundred miles away.'

For the first time Pedro surveyed the craft in which he was embarked. 'So, a crazy shell this ! In the name of St. Nicholas, how many thousand years hath it swam the sea ? '

'Many thousand.'

'Thousand ! ' echoed Pedro, darting a fierce look at the unmoved boatman, 'thousand ! '

The boatman paused a minute on his oars; then, leaning his long back towards Pedro, his breath chilling the flushed face of the prosperous man-seller, said—

'When the wood whereof was built the ark was yet green and budding, the boat you sit in was upon the wave.'

'Ha! am I stowed with a madman? Pull, slave—pull to your ship, or——' and Pedro clutched his pistol in his belt.

The sun sank and all was dark.

'Pull, dog!' shouted Pedro; 'pull!'

But the oars were still—the boat, as upon a rock, without motion. Pedro leaped forward to smite the boatman, and to seize the oars. He struck and groped in the darkness, and found himself alone! Pedro staggered back, and fell upon the seat; and immediately he heard the boatman at his task; the oars dipped in the wave, and the boat went on. The heart of Pedro beat at every stroke, and his face grew cold and wet as reeking marble. His hand fell dead upon his bag of gold—he plucked it thence, as though a snake had stung it.

Like an arrow from a bow the boat shot through the stream. All night the sound of the oars, true as the half-minutes, rang upon the brain of Pedro, and his bones became as ice. And when the morning dawned, Pedro saw the blue eyes—cold and bright as stars—of the old boatman gleaming upon him. He turned to seek his ship, and he saw nothing on the waste of water round about him. Pedro gasped and tried to speak, but his tongue was dead flesh in his mouth. And the sinewy arms of the boatman still swept the bending oars.

And there was nought but signs of sadness—terrible manifestations. The very sea, parted by the keel, touched by the oars, became stagnant and jellied.

A flying fish rose from the wave, and fell dead upon the oar; and the little nautilus closed its sail, and sank like a flint.

A shoal of dolphins gambolled to the surface, and,

as the oars dipped near them, the morning light brightened their mortal hues.

The shark darted at his prey, but sank with rigid jaws. The huge leviathan bellowed as the boat drew nigh—bellowed and disappeared.

The strong-winged swallow, follower of the sun, fell upon the boatman's knees!

And still the old boatman bent at his oars. There was no sea, bay, river, lake, creek, or dyke, whereon the boatman had not, in some way, plied;—trusted with revelling youth and beauty, he had wrecked a gondola; and now, as pilot, sunk whole crews on rocks and sands. In the darkness of night, he hath hailed a ship, and the next morn, the sharks have followed yawning for corpses.

And Pedro for a moment thought of his gains: of the human marrow he had bartered for minted gold. He glanced towards his foot, and he saw the metal melted into a mass, the skull of a dead man engraved in it, and his own name beneath. He looked again at the boat; for he had assured himself of a life of fullness—of palaces—of bowing crowds and glorious feasts!—he looked and he was alone—shrouded and in his coffin, drifting on an eternal sea!

And still it drifts—and still the spirit of Pedro, doomed by the old boatman, calls in the dead of the night to sinners on the deep!

'And said the monk no more?' asked Jabez, with a fallen face.

'Yes, he would lift his withered hands—and the tears would roll down his old cheeks—and he would cry with the awful voice of an old repented man—

'"*Oh, ye Pedros! rich and exalted with the evil that ye do upon your brethren!—in the fullness of your wealth—in the giddiness of your triumph—think of the Old Boatman!*"'

THE TUTOR FIEND AND HIS THREE PUPILS

THREE fathers had each a son; they were determined, come what might, that the boys should be wisely taught; in other words, should be instructed in the mode of *getting on*. They made all inquiries after a teacher, but, for some time, with no success; one was too poor, and therefore incapable of instruction; another, too merry—good-nature was a losing quality. At length, they heard of a person anxious, and, they believed, well fitted, to take charge of youth. The parents hastened to the master's abode; it was a miserable hut in the middle of a marsh; the croak of frogs and the buzz of flies were the only sounds heard about the master's dwelling, which was guarded by a little ugly cur, that, yelping at the approach of the visitors, caused its master to throw open the casement, and reveal himself to the view of those who sought him.

He was a man about sixty; his whole appearance wild and meagre. His face seemed sharp and bloodless; the dry, yellow skin, tightened over his high cheek-bones, came into more ghastly relief from a dead black eye. His brow was seamed with wrinkles. His hair, of speckled black and gray, drooped in unsocial lankness. His beard seemed half-rusted wire. His long, naked arms were fearfully muscular; and his nails hooked as the bill of a parrot. He was employed feeding a nest of owlets, with some crushed snails before him. Looking up at his visitors, he smiled, and displayed two rows of huge teeth, of pearly whiteness. He opened the door, and the visitors entered the tutor's habitation. It consisted of one room, grotesquely

furnished; Indian flies were pinned to the walls—here was the jaw of a shark—there a tiger's skin—with snakes of all sorts, wreathed in knots, hanging around. In one corner of the hovel was the miser's bed—a heap of rags, with an account-book for a pillow. A mess of adder-broth was on the fire, to which old Rapax (for so was the tutor called) invited the appetites of his visitors. 'There are eels,' said he, 'but adders *go the farthest*.'

The bargain was soon closed. Rapax was to have the children; and, next morning, Scowl, Topaz, and Blitheheart set out for their future master's dwelling. Topaz laughed as he stood on the other side of a ditch fronting the tutor's hut; then, springing over, he relapsed into a gloom as he approached the habitation. Scowl neither paused nor smiled; but dashed sulkily over, following his companion in silence. Blitheheart had tarried behind, gathering a water-lily; now he comes skipping along, bounds across, and arrives at his future school almost ere he sees it. Rapax was leaning through the window, pursuing his occupation of yesterday.

'You are welcome,' said he; 'enter. And you, sir' (addressing himself to Scowl), 'come, feed my owlets.'

'Feed owlets! Not I, by the rusty holiness of your beard. Feed owlets!'

'You, young sir' (to Topaz), 'will perhaps take the office.'

'An' they were a nest of linnets for a pretty daughter of yours, indeed would I; but owlets are not young men's birds.'

'Gentle youth,' said Rapax, turning to Blitheheart, 'will you assist me?'

'Willingly, sir,' replied the boy; 'but show me the fashion.'

The old man muttered to himself, 'Humph!—scornful, jesting, and ingenuous! Well, well—the same end by different ways.' Then to the youths—'But to our business. Enter; here we must lose

nothing, and we have squandered away ten minutes without a purchase.'

'I marvel,' said Topaz, 'at your exact calculation, for I see no dial here.'

'Nature's clock, young man—thus,' answered Rapax, as he placed his finger to his wrist. 'Can there be a better monitor than our pulse?—spurs it not to action? clamours it not against idleness?'

'No,' replied Scowl; 'it rather tells us of the uselessness of employment, for every pulsation is but the knell of life gone by.'

'Prithee, good father, what are you to teach us? Come, whistle for your dragon, and let us to the moon.'

'My business is not in the clouds, young man.'

'Shall we sail with you in a cockle-shell? Are you a sea-magician? I should like to string pearls with mermaids mightily,' said Blitheheart.

'Nor can I fathom the ocean,' observed Rapax.

'Will you then take us into the mines of earth? Shall we play at hustle-cap with diamonds? Shall we go into the earth?' asked Scowl.

'Ay, in good time.'

'Truly, yes,' sneered Topaz, 'and without your necromancy. Come, what will you teach us?'

'To be rich.'

'Then why art thou not rich thyself?' said Scowl.

'How know you that I am not? I am rich.'

'Are you so?' answered Scowl, with bitterness. 'Poor man!' and he looked sneeringly at the wretched abode.

'He who hoards gold,' replied Rapax, 'does it not for the insensible love of its glitter; but he looks abroad—he sees of what the eminence of human flesh is composed—he scrapes together wealth—and knowing that he can be splendid when he may, cares not to be so. Such am I.'

'And this mystery,' said Scowl, 'you are to teach us. How?'

'Enter, and learn.'

The youths entered the hut, and they seemed as

though struck with sudden plague. The old man took from a little box a piece of brilliant gold, impressed with cabalistic figures; and, throwing it upon the table, desired the youths to look at it. 'What think you of this metal? Each answer me. What is it?'

Scowl unceremoniously took it from the table, and throwing it up, and catching it in his hand, again cast it down scornfully, muttering—'Gold, the price of human brains!'

'But do you not value it?' demanded Rapax.

'I hate myself and all the world, that I must sometimes value this piece of ore beyond the flower or pebble trodden under foot. I value it not, but scorn it as I bow to it.'

'And you, young man?' said Rapax, glancing at Topaz.

'I look on this metal,' answered the youth, 'and I say to myself, "This life is a mockery; man hath made it a miserable one; and then he forms a partial antidote to its wretchedness, to be obtained by guilt, folly, or craft." Well, I have this antidote. I ask, "How can I use it to pleasure me?" Fancy gives me the answer, and—farewell, gold!'

'For me,' said Blitheheart, 'were I in a meadow, or by a roadside with this gold in my hand, and some miserable wretch, with pistol at my head, should ask me for the coin, I'd freely give it him; and, pitying his poverty, who made gold his only wealth, I'd raise my empty hands towards heaven, and, in the lasting beauty of creation, count me beyond all princes—rich!'

'Look on this gold,' cried Rapax, in a deep, commanding voice. There was fascination in the metal. The youths looked silently and intensely; their souls were in their eyes, and they were spell-bound. Their bosoms heaved, their mouths gaped, their fingers clutched the air, and tears rolled down their cheeks. The fiend had entered their hearts. The old man's face was wrinkled with delight, and a ghastly smile lurked at his shrivelled lips. The youths were changed,

as if by magic; they were the bondsmen of sin and rapine.

It was evening when the scholars quitted the hut. The old man gave to each a piece of coin. They had not proceeded far ere they were accosted by a wretched starving woman, with a half-naked babe. She first addressed herself to Scowl. 'In the name of Heaven, young sir, and as you hope to change this miserable world for one where sorrow never enters, give me charity for the sake of my poor babe!'

'And will you live to beg?—in the grave there is independence. Seek it!' And Scowl passed on.

The woman then turned to Topaz. 'You are merry, my good woman; you would but try us! Have beauty, yet ask for charity? Go to cities, go to cities.'

She then appealed to Blitheheart. He was about to speak, then paused, and at length stammered an excuse, 'he had no money.'

The youths proceeded on their way. For a time they were silent. At length Scowl observed, 'Surely our master works by magic; else I had not denied that woman. But a short time, and though I frowned at man and all his wants, yet would I have taken out my purse, and laughing at the abjectness of nature, emptied its contents to the crowd, to see them—like hungry fowls for barley—fight, and peck, and sidle for the grain. Now, I would dash among the feeders, and scaring them hence, fill my own pond with their corn even while it grew mouldy, while its rightful owners starved. A short time since, I scorned the world's misery and corruption; now, I will prey upon them. My heart is, on a sudden, hard and moistureless. Good thoughts have vanished from my brain; tears are dried up in mine eyes.'

'And where I would have smiled or meditated,' said Topaz, 'now I would sneer, and answer groans with gibes.

'Never before,' cried Blitheheart, 'could I have resisted that woman's appeal. I told a lie, and yet I did not blush. Surely we are bewitched!'

'But awakened to reason,' replied Scowl. 'The film is taken from our eyes. The eye of worldly reason looks farther into earth than the vision of romantic youth pierces the heavens.'

'How long,' asked Blitheheart, 'do our wise fathers propose to keep us at this academy? When are we to enter the world?'

'I know not—but soon, I hope,' said Topaz, 'for I long to have a match with its cunning creatures.'

'All in good time,' remarked Scowl. 'We are a while to look on the game before we play. Farewell; the night is coming on—and now her gewgaws have no charms for me. Good-night!' and each betook him to a different route, although one route led to their several habitations.

Every morning brought the scholars to Rapax. The fathers—though they complained of a growing lack of obedience in their children—could find no fault with the progress of their education. Indeed, they were charmed with their scholarship—they had grown so subtle, and so disputative! Rapax was a rare master.

One morning, as Scowl was about to visit the pedagogue, a girl—a young and beautiful girl—stood in the pupil's path. 'Jane!' he exclaimed, in a tone of mingled wonder and remorse. He glared fiercely at the girl, and her lineaments, seached by his eyes, awakened thoughts and images maddening and confounding. He threw himself upon a bank, and groaned heavily. 'Jane!' he repeated. The girl was at his side. His manner became more composed and solemn. He shook his head, as the eyes of Jane seemed eagerly to penetrate his mystery—he shook his head, and with a sickly smile exclaimed, 'You seek in vain.'

'Alas, have you not happiness?' mournfully inquired the girl.

'What is that,' answered Scowl—'that same enigma, *happiness?*—that common jilt—that sound of all lips—that mockery of all hearts? Fools lisp its name, and gray-bearded men crimp their wrinkled visages, and clasp their yellow hands, and look at the sky when

this happiness is named. What is it? I would learn —thou art a fair teacher. Have you known it? what was it like? how was it called?'

'Once I thought it bore the lineaments of your affection; I thought its name was your—your love!'

'My love! Pshaw! I have neither face nor form for woman's sublimer fancies. On my brow there are no curls to catch fair ladies' hearts; my lips are not honied, but steeped in gall; I am puny—misshapen—not at all the creature for a fair one's love.'

'Thou knowest my heart, thou knowest it's wholly thine!'

'I might have loved you once, but now—away, girl! Seek some pliant, thoughtless fool, who marries from fashion, because his neighbour weds, or his own blood burns. Show not to me love's wreath of flowers, my breath would taint the buds—my eye wither them!'

'Oh; what a change is this!' exclaimed the heart-broken girl. 'I ask not for myself—do as you will. But your parents—why are you thus changed towards them?'

'Parents! I have none—they are divorced from me —they drove me from their hearth, and placed me with another. He has taught me to scorn them—or at least to value them but as the common mass around me. Yet there is one I love—thanks to my good master! whom I love,—dearly, fiercely love! to whom I would sacrifice father, mother, thee—all ties that keep me to the world—all thoughts of man and man's affection.'

'And who—what is it hath this fearful love?'

'*Self!* That is my God! I make all else bow down and worship it! Farewell, we part for ever. When you see me turn yonder hedge, think me fallen into an unfathomable gulf. Farewell!'

'Stay!' exclaimed the girl; and then, in speechless agony, she held forth her clasped hands, looking imploringly at Scowl, who retreated a pace or two, and, with calm brutality, surveyed her posture of frenzy and despair.

'Truly,' said he, 'an inspired modern sibyl! Your attitude has all the eloquence of speechless misery; and yet, I think the neck is too——(she shrinks back). So—well improved! Now, would I were a sculptor! I would carve your image thus, to say my—ha! ha!—my prayers to—a stone! You would be a fitting partner for my heart. Seek you a human husband? All affections are dead within me—all feelings save one—an eternal and all-consuming pang—the pang of hunger, the longing after gold!'

'You, ambitious of such dross!—you, who have——'

'Laughed, mocked at it. My master hath taught me better. Mark me, girl—then shun me. So wild, so universal, is this craving after wealth, that did I think these yellow locks could, by chemical art, be made to yield one grain of gold—could your heart's last drop be petrified by death into a gem, although I saw beseeching angels kneel around you, I'd lock my hand within your hair—tear forth your living heart, and leave you, tombless, to the birds. Have I not said enough?'

He spoke to a senseless image. The girl fell, stricken by misery, to the earth, and the student pursued his way to the hut of the schoolmaster.

'How now, son!' said Rapax; 'why thus late? What have you to show in exchange for so much time?'

'A woman's broken heart,' returned Scowl.

'Ha! ha!' and the haggard fiend crowed in the laugh; 'put it by with the baubles. But come, what say you, my lads, we have tarried long enough here? Are you for moving? Will you all follow me?'

'We will!' was the sudden and unanimous response.

'Then,' said the master, 'prepare to meet me at twelve to-night upon the beach. I have a skiff, sail, and compass. By my art I have learned that where the sun sets is gold, and thither we will steer. Bid adieu to your friends, and be punctual.'

'Adieu!' muttered Scowl; 'as surely as the wave breaks upon the beach, so surely will I be there. For adieus!—but no matter. I say I will be there.'

'And I,' said Topaz.

'And I,' cried Blitheheart, 'will but run home to see what I may pick up to help me on the voyage, and then for the ocean.'

The young men departed from the hut, and the master busied himself securing his bags of gold, his jewels; with provisions, and all else needful for the enterprise.

The night came. Scowl was the first at the appointed spot. It was a narrow point jutting into the sea, which beat over vast fragments of rocks, fallen from the surrounding precipices. The night was chilly, the moon and stars were in the skies—yet there seemed a desolation in the heavens. The very beating of the waves was in monotonous accordance with the apathy of his soul, who, seated on the rock, raised his eyes from the deep to the cloud-veiled moon, as though they asked, '*Why* moves this water?' The moon returns him in mystery to the wave; and the sea-weed, that listless he plucks from the rocks, adds to the whole riddle; and all is darkness. His existence seemed to pause in the question of 'What *is* existence?' Night seemed again to shed some part of its former influence over him. After vainly venturing to search the hidden springs of nature—the wave's motion, the wind's chamber, the moon's glorious light—he wept at his darkness. He lay for a time the smarting penitent of nature, stricken down by self-accusation; whilst compunction triumphed over him, and, like the scorpion near the flame, he writhed, stung with his own venom. He prayed for the rock to yawn and swallow him; he asked for annihilation, or to change his being with the weed or shell-fish clinging to the cliff. His prayers were scoffed, he still must live, and bear the human stamp.

Thus for a time he lay, passively suffering the embraces of one who had watched and followed his steps, where even the nest-seeking schoolboy had feared to tread. By degrees the vacant look of Scowl changed from its wandering dulness, and his eyes flashed fire

He looked with a demon's glances at the girl, and, his voice rattling in his throat, he cried—

'Have I not said enough?'

The girl answered not; she sank upon her knees, and, pale and trembling, with outstretched hands and averted head, in silence awaited her destiny. Scowl raised himself from the rock, hurried to and fro on the little space allowed by the uneven surface—then stopping, and looking at the girl, he exclaimed—

'Jane!'

She turned her face towards his, but rose not.

'Jane! you have seen me weep, have heard me groan; you have beheld me snatch in hope at the fruits of heaven, and heard my teeth gnash at finding them ashes; you have twirled a shining serpent in my teeth, you have——' and he approached her with madness in his features.

'Oh God! and will you?' shrieked the girl, as trembling, she seized the arm that grasped her.

'What! fear you death? Look at the beach beneath. But a moment, and, when your fragile form shall dash upon its bed, you will be as insensible as the pebble you displace. The rising tide will bear you to the ocean's vault; and—ah! ah! singing nymphs will mourn the love-murdered maid. Why have you haunted me? Was it not enough that I gave up heaven, man's social feelings—pity, love, benevolence? Did I not already stand the grim, uncouth image of man?—must the mockery be painted with blood?'

'Are your wishes blood?' replied the girl, for a moment nerved beyond herself; 'I thought they were for gold!'

'And gold is blood!' fiercely answered Scowl. 'Could gold weep for the means by which men obtain it, a new Red Sea would swallow misers in their homes.'

'I have gold. Here' (and she presented to Scowl a small, well-filled leathern bag)—'here is gold—madness—infamy eternal! Ask not how I gained it!'

'Girl! What have you done?'

'Loved you—lost myself!'

'That woman should so fall!—But come, let me know your story—else, unwillingly, I may want gratitude.'

'This gold—I thought my heart would stop, my arm be palsied, as I touched it—was my father's. It is—oh! shall I say—it is my husband's!'

'Husband! I must trudge and sneak about the world filching from all men. A wife is an incumbrance to a social ruffian. Were I a proclaimed bandit, then you should be my robber-queen—should kiss my sword for good fortune when I went forth, and wash my hands from blood at my return. But I cannot war so. I take your offering, but leave your hand for another.'

'Oh, Heaven! you cannot mean!—Scowl! I have lost all for you! I must—I will follow you!—oh! look not so, for you cannot madden me. Be merciful!'

'I will, Jane; this is your dying hour! Say, is not death sweet amid these rocks, with the waves and the stars to witness the fleeting soul?'

'Death!—oh! to die with guilt so newly on me! Heaven have mercy! Save me—save me!'

Scowl seized the shrieking girl, who, after a short struggle, broke from his grasp, and rushed to a higher point of the rock. He follows her—she falls—and the next moment the beach bears a mangled corse.

A low, long whistle echoed among the rocks. Scowl leapt from point to point, gained the beach, and there beheld his master and his comrades. He threw himself into the skiff, and plied violently at the oar, as though he would numb the mind's action by bodily exertion.

For a time they proceeded in silence. At length Rapax exclaimed—

'What! lads, home-sick already? What! Scowl—dull?'

'Have I proved dull since we first met?'

'In truth, no; you are an apt scholar.'

''Tis well you had me. Had I learned from another master, I might have been as great a spendthrift as

I will now be a miser. But whither are we bound, and with whom are we to mingle ? '

' Our destined land,' replied the master, ' is a fruitful one, and the inhabitants as nature made them. They worship the stars, and offer fruits, flowers, and shells to the spirits of air, earth, and ocean. The land is a bloodless one, and their lives pass in the constant intercourse of what civilization calls benevolence ! '

' What ! ' said Scowl, ' have they no holiness ?—holiness that burns and tortures one another ? So, then be my trade hypocrisy ? '

' I,' said Topaz, ' will teach them to divide and subdivide their lands. I will show them how to make man-traps and spring-guns, and how (blest art !) to make a mystery of common sense ! '

' And I,' cried Blitheheart, ' will create disease, and then be physician infallible.'

' Truly,' said Scowl, ' our vessel hath a goodly freight—superstition, law-making, and physic ! '

' Welcome to your inheritance ! I give this land to your practices ! ' exclaimed Rapax, as he pointed to the shore, which, with miraculous speed, they had already approached.

Followed by his pupils, he pursued his way into the island. At length they beheld a multitude of people seated on the grass. The women were lovely, and the men seemed worthy of their fortunes ; their limbs indicated a pliant vigour, and in their features was that dauntless independence which surely adorned men in the early days.

It were long and vain to tell the means by which the strangers lured the people from their happiness and independence ; by which they set parent against child, and child against father. In fine, the land was civilized ; slaves were made, and taxes were levied ; some few fed to repletion, whilst thousands pined and died with hunger. Rapax and his scholars controlled the work. Trees were felled, houses built, the earth ransacked for iron for locks and bars, and swords and bayonets. Palaces arose ; then an inquisition, halls of

justice, and a school of anatomy. There were several prisons, and some admirable powder manufactories. There were, likewise, tax-gatherers and executioners. The people were civilized.

At length the seeming divinity of the taskmasters became a question. Some brave hearts spoke out. 'What!' said they, 'are millions to be fools and wretches, that some two or three may be idlers and knaves?'

At length, King Rapax—for king he was—approached the crisis of mortality. He ordered his riches to be displayed about his chamber; and his blood-shot eye gleamed with horrible delight, as he beheld the glittering heaps to which his soul was yet adhering; and he grasped a handful of gold even while its tinkling was responded to by the convulsive rattle in the miser's throat. When death gave the last charge, Rapax screamed and groaned as though he would fight him still; and, in the agony, he crushed the metal in his hand till the blood started from the withered flesh. Tearing away his vestments, he threw himself amidst a heap of gold, as though *there* he could defy his follower; and as he writhed among the ore, he scrambled for the jewels and the vessels that were about him, supplicating the assistance of the beholders to stand between him and his foe. A terrific laugh of triumph extended his jaws, as he stretched forth his hand to seize a massive piece of gold to hide his head from the attack. Just as, with almost supernatural force, he poised the weight above him, his eyes start, his tongue works in his mouth, the ore rattles with the struggles of his limbs, and the uplifted mass, falling with a crash, thunders the knell of the miser!

The ministers paused not a moment. The ghastly corse, heaped round about by gold, appalled them not. Each was rushing on to take possession, when shouts were heard, then the trample of multitudes. The doors were burst open; and the people, thronging onward, recoiled, as they beheld the naked body of their dead enslaver.

The pupils, one and all, pounced upon a small casket still held in the gripe of the corse. Scowl was master of the prize, and in an instant, cluding the vigilance of the people, disappeared. Topaz and Blitheheart likewise escaped. The streets were empty, the houses deserted; the old men, women, and children had been removed, under a strong guard, to a safe retreat, whilst the attack was made upon Rapax and the younger despots. Scowl, with two or three of his minions, tossed burning brands into the unguarded habitations; the winds arose, the flames raged, and destruction seemed to hover over the devoted city. Again Scowl led on his mercenaries; again he was defeated. The dwellings consecrated to the fair stranger-deities (for such Rapax and his pupils had been deemed) were consumed to ashes; nearly all who fought for the bad cause relentlessly slaughtered. A few, faithful in adversity, by Scowl's orders launched the boat which had first touched the island, and which had been venerated as something little less than sacred. There was no other refuge, save the howling sea, for the gold worshipper. All day he lay hidden; and when night came he hurried timidly to the spot where, in an obscure creek, lay the boat. His attendants were awaiting his arrival. Scowl, unwilling to venture with such a number in so fragile a bark, despatched all, save one, to his late hiding-place, in the excuse of having left there a treasure of great value. No sooner had the party quitted him than he leaped into the boat, and, bidding the man follow, was launching the craft into the sea, when his name was called, and, looking round, he observed his companions, Topaz and Blitheheart, rise from a pit which they had dug in the sand.

'My brother!' said Blitheheart, 'we have watched for you. Let us away from this cursed spot!' And, approaching, they were about to enter the boat.

'Stay!' said Scowl, 'this is all mine. Shall I not be rewarded for my work? What do you give for your passage?'

'You do but jest! What! friends barter for an act of grace!'

'I jest not. Pay me, and you shall make the voyage. Offer to palter, or to touch the gunwale of the craft, and——'

As he spoke out, he seized the oar, and stood in act to strike.

'I will humour you, though you do but jest,' groaned Blitheheart; and he gave him some twenty gems.

'More!—more!' exclaimed the insatiate Scowl.

Blitheheart fairly quivered with hate as he surrendered up all his hoard to the griping hand of Scowl, who then permitted him to take his seat in the boat.

'Surely you will not leave me!' cried Topaz, in an agony of fear.

'Ay, will I,' replied Scowl, 'unless you pay.'

'Alas, I have no means. I have lost all—all! But my future profits shall be yours.'

'I am no speculator, brother,' answered Scowl, with malicious coolness, at the same time pushing his boat from the strand.

'Blitheheart! will you pay my passage?' screamed Topaz, as he waded into the sea, stretching his hand towards the drifting skiff.

Blitheheart turned aside his head. Topaz, in madness, seized the boat. Scowl, catching up a sword, struck at the petitioner just above the wrist. With a piercing howl, he let go his hold—his hand hung but by the slightest filament. His shrieks were lost in a sudden shout. The party of Scowl were seen rushing down the beach, followed by the enraged multitude. His followers begged Scowl to return—he laughed! One of the men, seizing a musket, fired; but, missing his aim, wounded the innocent companion of Scowl and Blitheheart. The man was, in an instant, tossed into the sea; the sail was hoisted, the wind sprang up, and on the boat flew from the island. The passengers heard the tumult of the affray—clash of swords—groans and maledictions. The boat sailed on: and they were shortly girt about by the wild and dreary sea.

And the islanders were civilized. They knew the value of gold and iron; they bought slaves with the one, and made war with the other. They had prisons for debtors, and they could kill at two hundred paces. They were civilized!

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The old pilgrim quitted the companion of his travel when he reached the city. He looked at every house with suspicion. There was in his face the assumed meekness of devotion; but his eyes had, at times, a wolfish glare that made the beholder gasp as it flashed upon him. The devotee appeared aged and travel-worn, he seemed to walk and move from the impulse of some deep, unquenchable passion, rather than from the ease of natural motion. Frequently he paused as he slunk through the streets, and then hurried from the door he was about to knock at. He arrived at a mosque, and, as if instinctively, bowed his head. He sat upon the steps, and, wearied with travel, slept. His old limbs were crouched all night upon the marble. When the morning came, numbers stood about looking at the sleeper, who, according to the charity of the beholder, seemed something more or less than human. To some he appeared a sleeping fiend. His black distended eyelids were in strong contrast to the blood-less pallor of his cheeks; his sharp nose, as though protruding from the skin; his fallen jaw, discovering his firm-set teeth; and his arms, hugging his breast, gave him, with different minds, the appearance of a saint or devil.

At length a youth approached the sleeper, and pulled his garments. The pilgrim, as under the influence of some dream, sprang up, and seizing the affrighted youth, shouted, 'Where—where?' then, with the rapidity of thought, felt at his breast, and smiled as he seemed to grasp something. Then, a sudden cramp, the effect of his cold bed and the night air, shooting through his legs, he fell; and his forehead striking against the edge of the step, the blood gushed from the wound. The people closed about him to render

assistance; but, although stunned, he threw forth his legs to keep off the multitude, and never once loosened his grasp from his garment. At length the people resolved to carry him to a neighbouring surgeon; and the pilgrim, fainting from loss of blood, was borne to a low hovel in an obscure lane.

Here dwelt the leech, a rare compound of quaint humour, cheerfulness, and avarice. The wounded man was left alone with the surgeon, who bound up the hurt, and strove to unclench the pilgrim's hands. Insensibility gave the patient greater strength, and already the man of feeling trembled for his fee. He administered violent restoratives to the patient, who, at length, breathed more freely;—he panted, and his hands fell for an instant upon his knees. The surgeon thrust his arm into the sick man's bosom; a deep snarl rattled in the pilgrim's throat, as, recovering his consciousness, he grasped the arm at his breast, and then threw back his head to confront the danger that menaced him. There was a terrific interchange of look; eye flashed on eye, the face of each was distended, their lips worked, as though in disgust and hatred of the name they uttered—as 'Scowl,' 'Blitheheart,' fell, like venom, from them.

The companions were again united. The hunters had again met. A hatred of each other in youth had become more deadly in age; but dissimulation could give a seeming sanctity to the purpose of a fiend.

'Dear brother,' cried Scowl, 'you have a good trade.'

'Poor, wretchedly poor,' answered Blitheheart. 'What then, I am not what I was. Now wealth hath no charms for me' (Scowl glanced about the hut). 'Believe it—I have more silver in my beard than in my bag. But, come, you are wearied. Though we wear turbans we can drink wine—come, come, we are too old to be choked with a grapestone, I have no money, but I have credit—we will have wine, boy, and drink to the memory of our old master!' So saying, Blitheheart left the hut on his liberal errand.

Scowl had well scanned his early companion. He

had read him with eyes of distrust and hate. No sooner then had Blitheheart quitted the hovel, then Scowl cast his greedy looks around—every corner, every cranny, was ransacked—the search was unsuccessful. Waiting his companion's return, Scowl took up a knife to cut a thorn from his foot; he cut, and still his face was cold and colourless; he whetted the knife upon the stone floor, it stuck at a small iron ring. Scowl seized it, and bending every nerve to the effort, lifted up a huge granite slab. He staggered half-blinded from the spot, and the low roof echoed the rejoicing of the demon. A blaze of gold and jewels shone upon him. At this moment the door opened, and Blitheheart entered. Scowl threw himself before the treasure, and, with the knife firmly grasped in his extended hand, dared the approach of his 'dear brother,' who, bewildered at the discovery, moved not, spoke not, but breathed a deep groan of agony, let the pitcher fall, and, subdued to utter imbecility, threw himself upon his knees; he held out his clasped, trembling hands—the tears rolled down his withered cheeks—he tried to speak, but articulation was lost in guttural moanings.

'What! I have found a treasure!' exclaimed Scowl.

'My all—my all!' sobbed Blitheheart, tremulously.

'All!' echoed Scowl, and drawing his finger down the edge of his knife; and his eyes flashing with triumph, he cried, in a mingled tone of mockery and menace, 'Halves, brother!'

The lips of Blitheheart quivered as though struck with sudden ague. The veins worked, like young snakes, in his brow. Still, he strove to call up a ghastly smile into his face—'Halves—ay, ay—we'll see—but the wine is gone—we must have more—we——'

'Regale yourself, here is my banquet. Brother (by which dear name I claim half your substance), I say, halves! Why so,' he pursued, as he searched among the treasure—'this is well; a good trade, in fact, this physic. Brother, how many men die in this?' and he held up a piece of coin, and then again turned over

the store. The tinkling of every piece of metal added torture to Blitheheart; his clenched hands struck each other in impotent frenzy, and he rushed forward. Scowl dashed back the terrified wretch, a struggle ensued, and the tenant of the hut lay dumb and insensible. Scowl searched amongst the heap of wealth; he was speedily loaded, indeed he was almost held to the spot by the weight of his pilferings. He took up a large golden vase; twice he put it down, and then resumed it. It could not be, he must relinquish it. With hate and selfish disappointment he dashed it from him, and the metal tinkled against the bald skull of the dumb and prostrate man. Blitheheart groaned heavily, and Scowl, with a fiendish chuckle, crossed the threshold.

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'Is there no money?' asked a manacled wretch, and the rattling of his chains seemed to answer—'None.' The prisoner was a thin old man, whose face, though meagre, was animated with strong, contemptuous feeling. His lips seemed festering with satire. He slunk to a corner of his dungeon, and lifting a stone, took from under it a small bag; it was filled with precious gems. He sat down, and taking up a loose pebble, drove the jewels between the crannies of the dungeon walls. 'If they kill the bird, they shall not have the plumes,' he muttered, as he studded the cell of death with gems fitting a diadem. 'I fix them thus low, that they shall not glare upon men's eyes; for even in a dungeon man does not look down, his hopes will fly upwards, even though they lose their pinions through the bars.' As he accomplished his work the gaoler entered; a friend was at the gate. 'Friend!' echoed the captive, sneeringly, 'say I have no legacies.'

The visitor would take no denial; it was Scowl who came to console the captive Topaz. Scowl held forth his hand. 'What!' cried Topaz, with a malignant grin, 'have you another sword behind you? nay, leave one hand for the cord of the hangman.'

Scowl approached Topaz, and touching his chains, cried, 'Death, eh?'

'Yes, a little sleep after a long walk.'

'And these are the men we cultivated? We taught them to dig for gold, and they hang you for usury. 'Tis a jest, though not a blithe one. Come, no bequest for a friend? no wealth?'

'Wealth, I have none; though these fools hunt me for it. They surely think I have a vein of gold where other men have marrow. Yet I will bequeath you something!'

'What?'

'The rope that hangs me; 'twill serve you for a penitential cord.'

The gaoler entered, the friends must separate. They approached each other with outstretched arms. 'Think, brother, do you give nothing?' cried Scowl.

'Nothing!' was the answer. Scowl, turning his back on his companion, quitted the cell, and the usurer was led forth to death.

Scowl, as his vessel sailed from the land, beheld the carcase of the miser hanging to the winds.

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All was bustle at the village of ——. Scowl had returned to his native home. He had built a stately and gorgeous palace, yet the edifice had but few inhabitants. Two or three palsied old men from the poorhouse tottered in the halls, and the roofs, that might have sheltered monarchs, echoed the shambling tread of the pauper. Here Scowl would live in solitude, as though he communed with his riches, giving them nature and dispositions. He would talk to them (for his mind was sinking) as they were his ministers and friends.

At length he ventured a task imposed upon him by his late master. It was a dark wintry night when he hobbled to the marsh where once stood the cottage of old Rapax. Scowl began to dig the earth, and after a long and wearisome toil, he beheld the buried riches of his master. Here night after night he toiled,

removing the treasure stealthily to his mansion. One night he beheld a man moving slowly towards the pit—he saw him leap into it, and heard him rattle his wealth. Scowl sprang upon the robber, seized a bag, and swinging it with all his strength, dashed it against the head of his opponent, who fell, screaming inarticulate sounds. Scowl repeated the blows, then throwing in the earth, buried the unknown corse of Blitheheart with his idol. Scowl caught up the bag, and hastened to his mansion.

'It must be,' exclaimed Scowl, 'none else could know the spot.' And then he sought to place the bag with his stores: he felt in his bosom—groaned, and let the bag fall. The noise awakened his servants: the old men ran to their master, whom they found aghast and trembling. Scowl wildly cried, 'My keys! my keys! gone—buried!' One of the old men took up the bag—Scowl started forth to seize it, then staggered back as he beheld it wet with the blood of his victim. The servants cut it open, and the gold fell about the floor. Scowl stamped and shrieked as he saw the old men fighting and struggling for the coin. He rushed to the iron door of his treasures, forbidding all approach. Here, in madness, he raved for hours. The old men, terrified, and their suspicions awakened by the appearance of the bag, soon gave tongue to their fears. The civil authorities, with a crowd of villagers, were in attendance. They burst open the bolted door of the apartment which led to the retreat of the miser, and beheld him stretched at the door of his treasury. They raised him up—he was dead. In his madness he had flung himself violently against the door, and a deep wound on his brow showed the indention of one of the iron rivets with which the panels were studded.

These are the deaths of the three pupils of Rapax. One was gibbeted—the other murdered by his fellow—the third fractured his own skull against the barrier of his wealth. They all *got on* in the world.

A CHAPTER ON BLACK DOGS

Peter Vanderpup was a small citizen of Rotterdam. An idle Dutchman is an abomination throughout his fatherland; and yet Peter, though lazy, was not held infamous, but was suffered to smoke and loiter through forty years of useless life with an improving reputation, which in the forty-fifth year of its wear, for at such time our tale of gossip begins, was of the very best material, and of the most galliard cut. Not that Peter had taken the least care of the article; on the contrary, he wore his reputation as an emperor carries a diamond, worth provinces, in his hat; with an easy grace, a carelessness, yea, a seeming forgetfulness of the treasure borne about him; which carelessness mightily enhances the lofty spirit, the natural magnificence of the wearer. Strange it is! but reputation, like beavers and cloaks, shall last some people twice the time of others: not that there shall be the slightest difference in the quality of the article; no, not a whit; the commodity shall be the same to a thread; yes, the moral cloak, or jerkin, or doublet, or under whatever figure it shall please you, fastidious reader, to entertain reputation —never forgetting, that in a cloak the stuff wears capitally—the commodity shall be cut off the same piece of broadcloth, made to cover all the children of men, on their first appearance in this cold, bleak world—and yet, how different shall it turn out with different wearers! Even in their cradles, some refractory younglings—for, indeed, there are even babies of the most forlorn reputations—rend and tear their moral garments; whilst others, though they shall scream higher than a trumpet, shall split their one, two, four month characters to very tatters, are shaken not, chidden not, but dandled in untiring arms, cockered

with soft phrases, hugged, squeezed, wooed with sweetest pap, solaced with honeyed syllables.

Peter Vanderpup, when only ten weeks old, was, in spirit, a full-grown fiend. It was in the winter of 17—, when the bread that was hot in the morning could only be cut with an axe for supper; when cats were frost-bitten at the fireside; and when the burgomaster, Tosspotoff, having incautiously laid his hand upon a bottle at breakfast, had it fixed to the vessel until nightfall—it was in that awful winter, when all the crows of the north were turned white as cockatoos with the cold, that Peter Vanderpup, an infant of ten weeks' experience, resolutely refused to sleep in the bosom of his mother one minute after midnight, but, with much shrieking, and no less kicking, compelled his father, Jans Vanderpup, a meek, unresisting man, to rise from his warm bed, and, merely shirted, and with bare feet, to walk the narrow room—his toes bitten to the joints with the cold—singing, or rather shaking a song through his back teeth, to his unquiet heir; only to be lulled by such warbling. And whilst Peter the son would yell and kick, Jans the parent would call him an 'angel,' a 'popsy,' a 'mannikin,' a 'joy,' a 'precious creature,' the frost biting to the bone every limb of the praisemonger.

For a whole winter was Jans Vanderpup forced, by the despotism of his sleepless babe, to walk the room—hard penance for matrimony!—barefooted, and in his shirt, and that for two hours by the best Rotterdam clock;—now singing, and now uttering monstrous lies in sweetest similitudes breathed upon his son. Throughout a whole winter, until the primroses appeared, did Jans Vanderpup endure this ill; summer came, and Peter slept; but Jans was too far gone; he would sit and smile languidly in the sun, and though with manful heart he strove to linger until pickled herrings should come in for the season, the struggle was in vain—Jans died. That he was properly done for admits of no doubt; for four doctors attended him until hope fled with his breath. And then they consoled the placid

widow; for they vowed there had been no hope from the first. The truth is, Jans was never thawed. In his last moments he lisped 'Peter,' called him his darling love, his little angel, and died, frozen in the belief. And the parricide in short coats shook his rattle, and crowed like a cock. Strange! that the mother, indeed a shrewd, sensible woman, never guessed the cause of her husband's death: it is plain, however, she did not; for she would hug the parricidal baby in her arms, and call him her comfort and her only joy.

It would grieve us, did the reader think that we had dwelt too long on the infantine waywardness of Peter Vanderpup: for, be sure of it, we have a sufficing purpose for what we do; it being our design to show, that from his swaddling-clothes to his shroud, Peter Vanderpup had a character for goodness and sweetness thrust upon him; and, do what he might, that still the character would stick. Good reputation was to Peter not as a garment, but as his skin, he was never to be stripped of it: he might have wallowed with hogs in a sty, and in half an hour would have been as clean, as spotless as ever. Have you not seen it, reader? Shall not one varlet ruffle it in all mobs, flounder through many dirty ways, struggle through a maze of briers—and still have his good name—we mean his superfine cloak—without a wrinkle in it—a spot upon it—a tear, yea, even the fracture of a thread in it? And yet, put the same cloak upon another, and though he shall suffer but a casual jostling—though he shall tread a muddy walk carefully as a cat, and only tarry a moment to gather a dog-rose from a bush at the wayside, and—phew! what an unseemly rumple of his garment—what splashes of foulest mire upon it! and what a flaw—'a flaw!' cries detraction, savagely hooking in its tiger nail, 'a huge rent'—in his moral super-Saxony!

It has been shown under what adverse circumstances Peter Vanderpup, when ten weeks old, obtained from his frozen parent the name of angel. It is our further

purpose to make known how, throughout this life—and despite of a few disadvantages increasing and maturing with his years—Peter Vanderpup was the flower of men; yea, the very pink of Rotterdam. As faithful historians, we feel ourselves bound to describe the few personal and moral dark spots in Peter—dark to us, though, as shall be seen, looked upon by the world as illustrious beauties.

Peter Vanderpup was hump-backed, bow-legged, and having in his childhood fought with the cat for some fish-bones, had lost the sight of one eye in the contest. Without the artificial aid of stockings, Peter Vanderpup stood between earth and heaven four feet one.

Peter's voice was a croak—his speech a stammer. His leer was the look of an ogre, and he swore, even beyond the privilege of a Dutchman.

Peter was a drunkard, a solitary toper. He has been heard to declare his own thoughts and a bottle to be worth all the company in Holland.

Peter was a miser. Not a guilder would he have given to save his fatherland from the sea—his own small wealth not perilled by the deluge.

Peter was an ungrateful son, and has been known to hug himself and laugh when one man called another his friend.

Peter's heart was filled with envy of the rich and beautiful. The wise and the good were beneath his thoughts; the poor he spurned.

We have jotted down a few of the defects of Peter Vanderpup. Surely, surely, he was not a man to awaken smiles—to call forth good words—to sow kind opinions in the hearts of men! Yet, we repeat it, Peter Vanderpup was well spoken of. The men laughed with him, swallowing his poorest words as rare jests; whilst the women, by one acclaim, vowed him to be the sweetest of fellows.

Now what charm had Peter Vanderpup to hoodwink all eyes—to dazzle all judgments? What dust did he throw about him—what philter did he drop into the

cup of his neighbour ? What device, bought of fiends or furies, had Peter Vanderpup ?

Reader, Peter tampered not with fiends ; he had bought no spell—he worked no charm !

Then what the devil—(it is you, reader, who speak) *had* Peter ?

Peter had—a black dog !

' Did mortal eyes ever behold such a dog ? '

' What a face it has ! '

' And what a temper ! '

' And what genius ! It tells bad money, and fires off a gun like a Christian ! '

' 'Once played at chess, 'tis said, with a Leyden Professor, and beat him ! '

' 'Could a pup be had for love or guilders ? '

' Beautiful creature.'

' And to quit Rotterdam ! '

' To leave us perhaps for ever ! '

' Never ! '

Such were a few of the exclamations, such a brief sample of the eulogies, vented and pronounced by a circle of ladies, buxom wives and no less buxom widows, on Peter Vanderpup's black dog—on the inimitable Snout. For years had Rotterdam rung with the renown of the dog : the ladies of Amsterdam had vainly petitioned for the honour of a visit from Peter—for Peter and Snout were as one ; but the belles of Rotterdam were obdurate. Peter had from the first protested himself their slave ; and the labours of Snout were confined to his native city. Hence, much of the beauty and fashion of Holland would, from time to time, make pilgrimages to the birthplace of Erasmus and of Snout, and departing thence, would scatter abroad the praises of the black dog ! Wonderful Snout—fortunate Peter Vanderpup !

We have already hinted that Peter had a slight deformity of back—now Snout was the most graceful of his race. Peter had but one eye—Snout had two, and both brilliant as carbuncles. Peter's temper was

sullen and vindictive—Snout was of the happiest, and most playful disposition. We have paused to consider, and still we remember no social recommendation possessed by Peter Vanderpup. Now Snout, his black dog, had a thousand winning tricks to charm and delight all people; to draw about him all the female hearts of Rotterdam. In brief, there was no defect, no want of Peter, that was not set off by a grace, supplied by an excellence of Peter's dog. Hence, Peter was, somehow, merged in his dog: Vanderpup was become part and parcel of Snout. To no other cause, save to this moral unity—this incorporation of man and dog—can we attribute the good name and prosperity of Peter. Whether it was christening or wedding, birthday feast or other revel—there was Peter and his dog. And whilst Snout, with wonderful intelligence and docility, would from a company of forty or fifty ladies pick out the maids from the wives, and the wives from the widows—would sort a pack of cards, barking once at the clubs, twice at the spades, thrice at the hearts, and wagging his tail at the diamonds, with fifty other tricks not convenient for us to describe—Peter Vanderpup, the fortunate possessor of this canine wizard, would sit with the reputation of the dog beaming upon himself; with the bravoes and applause bestowed upon Snout gladdening the ears, and making big the heart, of Snout's master. And in this way, for many years, did Peter Vanderpup, without one touch of grace, without the smallest virtue of his own, fortify himself in the hearts of his people. He walked about Rotterdam sunning himself in the admiration paid to his black dog. Snout was the wonder of his kind: and the graces of the dog beamed upon the master. Happy the man who has a black dog!

We trust the reader feels a sufficient interest in Snout to read with patience something of his genealogy. It would be hard, indeed, if the origin of such a dog were lost, confounded with the beginnings of tens of thousands of curs littered only to fawn, bite, growl, yelp,

wag their tails, and die. The family of Snout belongs to history; and though our present purpose compels us to be brief in our genealogical notice, we cannot with a few words, dismiss Snout's great ancestor, the Black Dog of Cologne, pupped in the sixteenth century.

The reader is requested to take note that the evening of the 25th of June, 1517, was, on the Rhine, an evening of surpassing beauty. A man of staid and serious aspect—a citizen of Cologne—walked, meditatingly, on the bank of the river. He had the look of a scholar, or, what in those days was worse, of a philosopher. A youth in the garb of a mechanic, dragging a half-grown pup with a cord, approached the river: his purpose was plain—no other than the death, by drowning, of the unwilling puppy. The dog, with a fine intelligence—how abundantly was it manifested in after times!—pulled and struggled, and, at length, breaking the cord, scampered from his evil-doer to the philosopher; crouching at his feet, and looking piteously in his face. The youth, intent on the death of the dog, pursued him, when the philosopher begged the life of the puppy, promising to be a master to it. The request, backed by a small piece of silver, was readily granted, and the black dog gambolled at the side of his new master, to his dwelling. The dog, though the property of a scholar and a philosopher, was well tended and well fed; and, in a few months, became the admiration of the citizens of Cologne. Monsieur—such was his name—was, in truth, a magnificent fellow; of the largest and noblest form, with a skin glossy and black as the feathers of the raven.

The descendants of Monsieur are too numerous to be named even in our pages; their destinies were as various and chequered, ay, as the fortunes of men. We find among them—house-dogs, with fat, well-fed cooks; dogs that never had a house, lean, gaunt, hungry, and savage; dogs that have barked all their lives at the fire and in the sun, and have, at length, been charitably drowned, when oppressed by corpulent old age; dogs that with hungry bellies have turned the spit,

their bowels mocked with the savoury roast; dogs nestling in the laps of beauty, yea, kissed by fragrant lips, combed by snowy hands; dogs leading the eyeless beggar; dogs scourged into villainous accomplishments, dancing at wakes and fairs with melancholy grace; dogs that have followed camps; dogs that have guarded sheep, and dogs that have worried them. Such are to be found among the descendants of Monsieur, the great ancestor of Snout. Were it our will, we could give abundant anecdotes of the race of Monsieur; could, at least with the help of the heralds, make up a direct line from the Black Dog of Cologne to the Black Dog of Rotterdam. We waive the labour, content that the reader shall take the truth on our authority, that Monsieur, the black dog of Henricus Cornelius Agrippa, was the great progenitor of Snout, the black dog of Mynheer Peter Vanderpup!

The reader, it is our hope, will, after due thought, appreciate the motive that restrains us from entering more fully into the pedigree of Snout. Under the happiest circumstances, it is no light labour, sometimes no savoury task, to go rummaging back two or three centuries for family evidence. What running to and fro, what trudging from city to city, what threading of blind lanes, what perilous ventures up alleys, what skirmishing of suburbs and villages! and though we have, with untiring lips and cheerful hearts, done all this to assure ourselves of the descent of Snout and Monsieur, nevertheless, in our genealogical pilgrimages, have we tumbled upon adventures that, though of the deepest interest to the canine antiquarian, would, we are sure of it, be tedious to the general reader. How often, to seek the genealogical line, have we been compelled to descend into the kitchen, and then again to mount into the parlour; now to run after the dog that follows a coach, then, by and by, to find the dog that, combed and scented, looks saucily out of the coach-window. No; reserving this point, to be fully elaborated in a small graceful folio, we shall merely repeat the sum of our researches—namely, that Snout,

the Black Dog of Rotterdam, might claim for his great ancestor, Monsieur, the Black Dog of Cologne!

What a wise and gentle nature was Cornelius Agrippa's. With a mind stored with knowledge, and a heart soft with benevolence, Cornelius had unhappily a vice that made his fellow-citizens draw apart from him; that caused the children in the streets to point at him; that made him now captive, and now outcast; that tainted him, as with leprosy, with the foul name of sorcerer; that gave him as the hourly companion of the great fiend; that made him the plotter and contriver of all evil; that banished him from the affections and the sympathies of men. Alack! what horrid vice had Cornelius Agrippa?

Cornelius Agrippa had a black dog!

There was a time, and Agrippa had the respect and good word of all men. Cornelius became a philosopher, and kept a black dog. He was, the good folks would say, a gentleman and a pious Christian; but he had given himself to the fiends; and though enduring the sharpest anguish, made gold by magic.

The city of Metz was alive with the hopes of holiday. A country wench—her dead mother a suspected witch—was to be tortured into confession of the old woman's iniquity. Once the girl had braved the rack, and a second time the child of the sorceress was to be tormented; when—oh, shame and disappointment!—Cornelius Agrippa snatched the girl from the impending horror, and in good round terms called her Dominican accuser a knave and blockhead.

'A pestilent fellow!' cry the Dominicans, 'this Agrippa! But what is to be hoped of his forlorn soul?' and then they vow the devil aids him. Yes, the philosopher snatches the shrieking prey from the fangs of superstition, and Slander leers, and points, and cries—'The devil is with him: mark the black dog!'

Agrippa tarries in Louvain. A student, a companion and fellow-lodger of Agrippa, drops dead in the street. Is it apoplexy? no, a murder by the fiends. The tragedy was thus: Cornelius, leaving his study, locks

the door, and giving the key to his wife, desires that no one may be admitted to his papers and books. Notwithstanding this injunction, the curious student obtains the key, and enters the circle of the magician. He opens a book of magic, and having read a line is disturbed by a knocking at the door; after a moment he reads on, when the demon without begs to know why he has been summoned; the student, not knowing what to answer, is straightway seized by the devil, and, for his ignorance, torn piecemeal. At this moment Agrippa returns, when the devil and his companions, for the fiend has called two or three fellows to the work, are about to jump out of the window. Agrippa sternly calls them to account, and learns the fate of his scholar. On this, he gives an order to the homicide devil to enter the carcass of the murdered student, and straightway to walk into the street most frequented by the scholars: to lounge about for a few minutes, and then, quitting the carcass, to let it fall as if struck by sudden death. The devil punctually obeys the commands of the sorcerer, and for a time the trick succeeds;—the student has been smitten with apoplexy. It is, however, remembered, that the dead scholar was the companion and pupil of Cornelius Agrippa: the authorities smell foul play; the body is closely examined, when marks—plain as if printed—of strangulation, are discovered on the corpse. The whole town is in consternation, and Cornelius Agrippa takes to his heels. Now, how did the whole story come out? Was there evidence of the appearance of the fiend? Was the tale duly unfolded, or was it guessed at, picked out, by ignorance and malice? Alas! Cornelius Agrippa, when he went to Louvain, took with him his black dog!

Agrippa, in poverty and wretchedness, was hunted, punished for a magician, who, at a wish, might have been served by purses of gold, with a hundred covers. Was his penury no proof of his innocence? Would the man who could make gold, live the life of a pauper? Such would be the query of reason—of common sense; but there was no contending against the fact; Cornelius

Agrippa had a black dog. Its evil reputation travelled from town to town with the philosopher, growing as it went. It was all in vain that Agrippa protected the innocent, and informed the dull; it was enough for ignorance—all-sufficient for prejudice, that he had—a black dog.

And mark the crowning slander. See poor Agrippa on his death-bed. See him in the hospital of Grenoble, with his black dog looking affectionately in the white face of the dying philosopher.

'Go, poor dog,' he cries; 'go, and mayst thou find a happier master! I have had some trouble for thy sake; for thou hast been slandered as a demon and a fiend, when thou wast the truest of servants; go, but if thou wouldst live in peace, follow vice or folly that grows rich; for, till the world grows wiser, it is not for the poor philosopher to be at ease, and keep a black dog.'

We are ready to swear our belief in this address; we are convinced that such words, or words to this effect, were uttered by Agrippa to his faithful follower, to the companion of his studious hours; for Monsieur —as testified by Jean Wier, Agrippa's servant and disciple, who has fully vindicated the character of the dog, avowing him to be no devil, but a perfect dog (*ut verè naturalis erat canis masculus*)—was wont to lie on his master's papers at his feet, and sometimes, says Wier, to eat at his table. Such was, no doubt, the farewell of the dying philosopher; and now, reader, if your boiling blood will permit it, read the wicked slander of Paulus Jovius. We pass the first two falsehoods proved upon the biographer; namely, that Agrippa died at Lyons, in a low pot-house. These are minor errors, conveying no stigma on the dead, leaving no spot on the white fame of philosophy. A man may doubtless quit the world as comfortably from Lyons as from Grenoble; whilst there are philosophers who might even give the preference to the pot-house over the hospital. We will not very gravely rebuke these errors—our scorn is reserved for the uncharitable

treatment of the wise and good man ;—for the heinous slander on the faithful black dog. Observe, what a death-bed Paulus Jovius gives to Cornelius Agrippa.

The philosopher is moribund in a pot-house. With inexpressible agony of heart, with the terrors of hell in his face, and his voice screaming with remorse, he calls to him the black dog. Mark the leer with which the fiend glances at his victim—how he smacks his lips at the shortening breath of the philosopher ; how his nails thrill and tremble with anticipations of the tearing to come. Pah ! the wretched cabin reeks with brimstone ; and the good wife, who has come to close the eyes of the dying man, stands fluttering in the corner with her apron to her nose ; how hideous the face of the philosopher, how horribly human look the eyes of the dog !

'Come hither,' gasps the dying man, and the terrible black dog stretches his neck towards the deathly hands of Agrippa ; who, groaning and howling with agony, unfastens a collar armed with spikes (Paulus Jovius is very particular in the matter of the collar), and then exclaims, '*Abi, perdita bestia, quæ me totum perdidisti*,' upon which the brute bounds from the spot, and rushing into the Saone, immediately drowns itself. Having exclaimed, 'Hence, accursed beast ! thou hast destroyed me,' Agrippa falls back in his bed, and straightway dies. It must be owned that in the sixteenth century it was a ticklish thing for philosophers to keep a black dog.

To return from Grenoble, from the death-bed of Agrippa, to the living Peter Vanderpup, of Rotterdam.

In the forty-fifth year of his age, Peter resolved to leave his native city. To the consternation of the women, he made known his irrevocable intention of journeying to Amsterdam. Slander whispered a cause for the departure of Vanderpup, but we give no credence to the story. We do not believe that Hymen had any share in the transaction ; though many of the sage ladies of Rotterdam declared that the offers of a certain widow, the head of a party in the rival city, were well

known; that, in fact, it was nothing short of a conspiracy to deprive them of their darling Snout, the pride and glory of Rotterdam.

What was to be done? Was Peter Vanderpup to be suffered to depart? Were the women of Amsterdam to triumph without a struggle? Was Snout to be pusillanimously delivered up to their rivals? Was Peter Vanderpup to be married in spite of their teeth? Great was the bustle throughout Rotterdam. And what, it may be asked, was the deportment of Peter? He was in that sweet serenity of temper that often arises from a profound sense of personal worth. He, the hump-backed, bow-legged, one-eyed, hoarse, stammering, drunken, envious, uncharitable knave, was calm amidst the hurricane; for he knew his price, he felt the value of the black dog.

In the meantime the women met and debated, and it was determined, at any venture, to prevent the departure of Peter—at any sacrifice, to keep possession of the black dog.

The widow Van Pont was, in her forty-seventh year, left the mistress of untold wealth. For three years had she pined in widowhood, refusing all solace, foregoing every enjoyment, save the harmless recreation afforded by the tricks of Snout, the darling dog. It was curious, but at a supper—one of the half-dozen to be given to Peter before his departure from Rotterdam—Snout, when asked to declare the lady who should be the next bride, after passing every unmarried female, paused before the widow Van Pont, pointed his forefoot, wagged his tail, and barked thrice. All the company laughed; but the widow Van Pont coloured and looked grave; and then, throwing a lump of sugar to the black dog, called him a simpleton, and a foolish little thing.

Reader, believe not the words of the widow Van Pont; the dog wagged not his tail without significance: for in less than a month the widow Van Pont was the wife of Peter Vanderpup, and lawful mistress of the black dog!

We may now state that Peter never purposed to migrate to Amsterdam; but with a full sense of the manifold virtues of his dog, and by consequence of his own inestimable price as the owner of Snout, resolved to snatch a due reward. His small means were every day becoming less, but happily the fame of the dog was on the increase. The dear, delightful, sagacious Snout was become the very darling of all the parties of Rotterdam: and Peter, like a wise and worldly man, without any virtue of his own, was determined to make the most of his black dog.

Reader, think of the citizen of Cologne and the citizen of Rotterdam, of the vilified Monsieur of the sixteenth century, and the fondled Snout of the eighteenth. Truly it is not given to every man to make the most of his black dog!

A TALE OF THUNDER

'We met in storm, and thunder shall not part us.'—KNOWLES.

NOBODY would have believed it of Mr. Simmons, that in the twenty-fifth year of his age he had committed a theft: no one could have thought, from the innocent, placid looks of Mrs. Simmons, that she had been accessory to the enormity. Truth, however, will out; that is, sometimes. Mr. Simmons had, when a bachelor, robbed a family of their youngest daughter. To be sure, there were times when he would reproach himself and his wife with the deed, wishing it had never happened but anon, the compunctious twitchings would subside, and Mr. and Mrs. Simmons would display all the sweet serenity of early innocence.

Mrs. Simmons had an unconquerable dread of thunder!

We give to the announcement of this fact all the importance of a paragraph; for if the reader, for one moment, lose sight of it, then will he forget the whole end and aim of this our story; and the beautiful family moral enshrined in it will be to him as flat as the dissolved pearl of Cleopatra—as apocryphal as the wedding ring of Phryné.

Mrs. Simmons, from very babyhood, dreaded thunder. Why, we will not attempt to explain. Antipathies are a part of the mystery of our being; and a hundred classical illustrations show, at once, their antiquity and universality. A Roman Emperor, who would think nothing of wetting his sprigs of laurel with the blood of ten or twenty thousand bipeds, faints at the sight of a roast pig: a King, with the bowels of a Nero, goes into a swoon at the odour of a rose. We knew a judge who looked upon rope, when noosed into a halter, as one of the most sacred bonds of society; and yet the venerable man would faint dead as a miss in a ball

room, if, when going to the assizes, he should snuff through his carriage window the odour of the flowering hemp. For the manufactured article he had, we repeat, the greatest veneration ; his antipathy was only developed by the natural product : that would knock him down, as his sentence would prostrate the felon in the dock. We knew another instance in the mysterious weakness of a very celebrated attorney ; of a practitioner who had been the most successful law-spinner of his day, who had illustrated the exquisite subtlety of our legal system to the astonishment, if not to the approval, of all he meddled with ; and yet this man, whose hair and —ill-natured people added—his heart too had grown gray in the service of his countrymen and himself ; this man would drop lifeless as parchment, at the sight of a spider. Who shall explain these contradictions ? Who will give us the philosophy of antipathies ? Why did the statesman—we forget his name—on his way to the House, tumble in syncope from his horse, at the cry of 'Stop thief ?' Thus it will be seen, that our antipathies are not merely operated upon by things ; but that words—words alone—are sufficient, in some susceptible natures, to touch the chord of all we abhor.

Having given, as we think, some memorable examples of antipathies, can our readers be surprised, when we state for the third time, that Mrs. Simmons dreaded thunder ?

Mrs. Simmons had been reared by a virgin aunt ; a lady who, from the hour she was forsaken by a marching ensign, had resolved to take her cup of life without the sugar of matrimony. Being deserted, her determination to live single increased every year, and, at fifty, became invincible. Like all benevolent people, she wished to make all about her participate in her happiness ; hence, to her niece, she expatiated on the abounding merits of celibacy, with all the ardour of long experience. In the belief of the aunt, the niece—so much had she profited by discourses in which all men were painted, at the best, but as civil vipers—had no more feeling for the sex than the china shepherdess on

the mantel-piece. In truth, there was strong evidence of the nun-like demureness, the frozen civility, of Miss Charlotte Atkinson, afterwards Mrs. Simmons. Where other young ladies would blush and fluster, Charlotte would preserve a most statue-like gravity. The blood never rushed to her face at any well-turned compliment; and, to say the truth, her face was not one to escape such civility. Indeed, without giving an inventory of her charms, we shall content ourselves with saying thus much—Charlotte was beautiful! What fine things have been said and writ about the Venus de Medicis; and yet there she stands, the hard-hearted goddess—with a smile that shall last for ever, an unwrinkled loveliness for unborn ages—and so would Charlotte Atkinson wake love and despair, if not for ever, at least in her own conceit, for the term of her natural life, upon all adorers. She would wear a face of smiles and a heart of stone. Such was the determination; and the maiden aunt looked proudly on her proselyte. Alas! in such triumphant speculations there was no thought of the distant thunder!

Miss Charlotte Atkinson, with her aunt and bachelor uncle, attended the county ball. Charlotte was then twenty-one; in the full glow of beauty, and more strongly fortified by those ennobling principles, which, if sternly acted upon by the fair sex, would bring this pleasant world to a sudden close. The ball was extremely brilliant; and Charlotte danced and danced, changing partners as she would change a flower in her hair. Mr. Stephen Simmons was among the happy half-dozen honoured by the touch of her chill hand: for which good fortune he was partly indebted to his acquaintance with Charlotte's uncle, an old friend of the Simmonses. The ball ended. Miss Atkinson was led to the coach by Mr. Simmons, who, to the astonishment of the aunt, was invited by her brother to take a seat therein, their way lying the same, and—as Simmons had assured the old gentleman—no other conveyance being procurable: 'the coach expected' by Simmons 'had not come.' Reader, hear the truth.

Stephen Simmons, for some purpose best known to himself, had sent his coach away.

The sun was up, the birds sang in the bushes, as the coach rolled homewards. Stephen Simmons sat by Charlotte, with beating heart, his tongue fast in his mouth, and his eyes trying to look anywhere save in the eyes of the maiden aunt, which he felt nailed upon him. How different the demeanour of Charlotte! We know not the precise number of country dances—(in the days we write of there was no finical quadrille, in which people walked in their sleep)—that any full-bodied ball-room labourer can go through; but, certainly, Charlotte had danced her utmost; and yet there she sat, dying with fatigue, yet serene as Cato's daughter. Once, in the dance, Stephen ventured to squeeze her palm, when she gave him a look that made him drop her hand like a thistle. There he sat, in the coach, awed yet loving: there sat she, awful yet exquisitely indifferent.

'Humph! very black!' said the uncle, looking from the coach-window.

'Bless me! big drops of rain!' said the aunt; and Charlotte turned a little pale.

'I shouldn't wonder,' ventured Stephen Simmons, 'I shouldn't wonder if——'

Mr. Simmons said no more; indeed, it is wonderful the words were not his last, for Miss Charlotte Atkinson had thrown her arms so tightly round his neck; so closely clung to him, that—

'*Bang—bang—crack—crack—bang—b——ang!*'

But no; the type-founder cannot do it: there is no printing thunder; especially the terrific claps that seemed to break immediately over the carriage roof, and which, destroying the solemnity of Charlotte Atkinson, made her, in her hour of terror and peril, throw her arms about the neck of her masculine neighbour. Not that Mr. Simmons could at all flatter himself with the mark of distinction; for, had he been a Hottentot, Charlotte would—at least whilst the thunder lasted—have squeezed him no less fervently.

'Charlotte, my dear,' said the uncle, 'don't you see that Mr. Simmons——'

'Let her alone,' cried the aunt; 'it's thunder, and that's the only fault she has;' that sage lady being fully convinced of the power of Charlotte's antipathy, and the strength of her principles.

'As she hates the whole sex,' thought the aunt, as Charlotte continued to clasp the neck of Simmons, 'there can be no harm in it.'

The thunder continued, and still Charlotte, unconscious of the impropriety, sought protection of Stephen; who, accommodating himself to circumstances, felt, by degrees, the pressure less inconvenient; by degrees, too, it relaxed; and then, as the thunder was renewed, he felt himself spasmodically embraced, to the utter destruction of the economy of his neckcloth. At length the thunder became subdued, and was heard muttering away in the distance; and the fears of Charlotte were less violent, and Stephen felt a heart beat, but whether his own or the lady's he could not well decide; but he felt himself supremely happy. At length, the aunt touched Charlotte on the hand—'My love, it's done—it's done!' when Charlotte, recovering herself, looked a smile that went clean through the bosom of Stephen, and sweetly said—'I thank you, sir; many pardons; I'm better now.'

A short three months, and Charlotte Atkinson became Mrs. Simmons! To the astonishment of Charlotte's aunt, the sun rose and set in its ordinary course—the sky was blue—the fields green—and the unfeeling people of the world went about their business, laughed, talked, and gossipped, just as before; and yet—Charlotte Atkinson had eloped with Stephen Simmons! The intimacy so violently commenced in the thunderstorm soon ripened into love; and the result was—a carriage and four to Scotland.

Jumping ten years, come we at once to the christening of the first-born, the son and heir, little Stephen Simmons. For ten years the wedded couple had remained

unblessed by progeny, when the baby came to make them truly happy—to make them forgetful of a certain coldness, an indifference towards each other, that, commencing about the sixth year of their marriage, continued with unabated constancy until somewhat beyond the ninth. The truth is, Mrs. Simmons had not, with her maiden name, lost a certain imperiousness of manner, a frigidity of feeling, which the possessors too frequently mistake for a proper assertion of female rights—a due display of conjugal dignity. Hence she would sometimes very strenuously differ with that worthy man her husband, without condescending to advance any reason for such eccentricity. It was enough ; she thought so ; and would say no more.

One lovely autumn evening, six years subsequent to their marriage, Mr. and Mrs. Simmons had determined on an evening call upon a no-distant neighbour. Mrs. Simmons, dressed for departure, advanced to the window, and looked forth, moodily. ' Mr. Simmons '—for she had too much dignity to dally with Christian names —' Mr. Simmons,' said the lady, ' I shall not go out.'

' And why not, Mrs. Simmons ? ' asked the husband, for, from habit, he had caught something of the icy manner of his wife. When first married, Stephen was a most cordial, genial creature ; but he had been cooled down by the method of his partner to corresponding frigidity. ' Why not, Mrs. Simmons ? '

' I have said, Mr. Simmons, that I shall not go out,' repeated the lady.

' Our friends expect us, Mrs. Simmons,' was the mild remonstrance of the husband.

This meek rejoinder Mrs. Simmons answered by pulling off her gloves, placing her bonnet on the table, and serenely sinking in a chair.

' Mrs. Simmons ! ' exclaimed the husband, putting his hat on with sudden vehemence.

Mrs. Simmons was not to be ruffled by the ill-manners of her husband. Without deigning to look at him, she merely observed,—' Mr. Simmons, look into the sky.'

' Well, madam ? ' and Simmons did as he was ordered.

'There will be thunder to-night, Mr. Simmons.'

'Pooh!' said Simmons.

'What, sir? But you can have no sympathy with the delicacy of my organisation. I say there will be thunder.'

'Well, what of it, madam? 'Sdeath! you are a woman, ar'n't you, and not a barrel of beer?'

'Mr. Simmons,' exclaimed the wife, and her words came cutting as the east wind, 'it is very plain we have no mutual sympathy: we had, therefore—I have before thought of it—better separate. We will not give the world occasion to talk; we may still keep up an appearance of esteem—but still, separate we must and shall.'

'Be it so; with all my heart, madam. Thunder!—I'm sure, of the two, I have the greatest cause to tremble at it. Now—now, Charlotte,' cried the relenting Simmons, 'it is a lovely night—it is, indeed; and besides, if it should thunder, where can you be better than with your husband?'

Mrs. Simmons put the most polite scorn upon her face, as she answered, 'I trust, Mr. Simmons, that my own energies will be equal to the occasion.'

'Then, zounds! madam, why, six years ago, did you nearly throttle me in the coach?' cried Simmons.

'Mr. Simmons,' answered the wife, 'you are a brute.' With this brief, yet comprehensive reply, Mrs. Simmons moved, like Domestic Tragedy, from the apartment; and Simmons, rushing from the house, shut the door with a violence that made his homestead reverberate with his passion.

Simmons was really fond of his wife, despite her ice; hence, vexed and disappointed by her, in his very annoyance he stayed at his friend's house long beyond his usual hour; and more, for once in his life, out of pure vexation, drank himself into maudlin drunkenness. It was late—we will not name the time—when Simmons returned home; and without even sufficient capacity to count the number of his bedposts, he still contrived to slide between the sheets. He awoke early, with

a first-rate headache; and, to his astonishment, found himself alone. Charlotte had risen early, in disgust of the bacchanal. Such was the first humiliating thought of Simmons: but no, a closer scrutiny convinced him that the wife of his bosom had not been in bed. Had she really separated from him? Had she quitted his house? Simmons snatched at the bell-pull: in an instant, the servant was at the door. 'Where 's Mrs. Simmons?'

'Not up, yet, sir.'

Simmons was relieved from a weight. Charlotte had not quitted him: she had merely separated herself for one night from him. Simmons knew not the uncompromising sternness of his wife: hence, for the three following years and an odd month or two, was she

A banished woman from her Stephen's bed;

—self-banished to a distant room. Simmons called pride to his aid; and, that is audibly, murmured not.

However, it was impossible that the conduct of the couple, especially of Mrs. Simmons, could be lost upon their visiting acquaintance. The tenderness of the wife before company increased daily: it was no longer 'Mr. Simmons,' but 'My dear.' Whilst Simmons himself would sometimes hazard 'My love;' nay, has been known to venture upon 'My darling girl.' Everybody cried, 'What a happy couple are the Simmonses!'

And thus, for three years and more, lived Mr. and Mrs. Simmons. The husband, to save appearances, meekly resigned himself to his fate; whilst the wife reposed upon her dignity when alone, and indulged her verbal tenderness when out. These things continued for three years and some months.

What a day was the 12th of July, 18—! The heat was terrific; and the sun set with a promise of its continuance. At one o'clock in the morning on the 13th of July—for in this matter we must be particular in dates —Simmons, who was a very sound sleeper, was half-wakened from his rest by cries and knocking at his bedroom door.

'Simmons!—Simmons!—My love!' cried Mrs. Simmons.

'Who 's there?' cried the yawning Stephen.

'*Crack—crack—bang—bang—bang!*'

'Stephen! my—my darling—' screamed Charlotte.

'Who is it?' asked Simmons, drowsily.

'*Bang—bang—b——ang—b——ang!*'

'My love!—my life! Open the door—for Heaven's sake!' exclaimed the wife, roused by the thunder-storm in her bed-clothes, and standing, pale and trembling, at the inhospitable chamber-door of her somnolent husband.

'*Crack—crack—bang—bang!*' went the thunder.

'Stephen—if you ever loved me—Stephen!' shrieked Mrs. Simmons.

'Is it you, Charlotte?' asked Simmons, opening the door. 'Charlotte! is it—'

But where was Charlotte? She had rushed by her husband, and, with her head under the blankets, was in an instant again safe in her conjugal bed. A few minutes, and the thunder died away—and all was peace.

It is true, that for six years Mr. and Mrs. Simmons were coldly respectful towards each other; and for little more than three years were living in separate dignity. However, at the christening of little Stephen—(the certificate of his birth ran 'April 14, 18—')—they were wise enough to laugh at, yet lament, the folly that had divided them; Mrs. Simmons wisely counselling all women not too lightly to estrange themselves from the affections of their husbands, lest, when thunder *of any kind* should come, all might not, like the good-hearted Simmons, be so ready to receive them.

The baby was christened after its father, Stephen; much to the annoyance of the family friend and doctor. 'I tell you,' he said, 'you should keep Stephen for the second; this child should have a more heroic name.'

'What name, then, Doctor?' asked the smiling mother.

'What name, madam? Why—*Jupiter Tonans!*'

ALDGATE PUMP: A LEGEND

John Stow, London's historian, lived many years a poor parishioner of Aldgate: (it may here be noted, that James the First, with princely munificence, granted to the grey-headed chronicler a royal permission—*to beg* in churches,) yet, in Stow's 'Survey,' have we no inkling of the Golden Legend of Aldgate's Pump. Perhaps, with culpable gravity, he deemed the story beneath the severity of his theme. Perhaps, curious and persevering as he was, he had never stumbled on it—never heard the marvellous, the moral-bearing tale. We will charitably hazard a third conjecture: perhaps, in Stow's time, the Pump had not been placed above Aldgate's well. Yet, granting that, in his day, the Pump was there, how many historians have we who can faithfully narrate to us the gossip, the small scandal, that went on at the building of the Great Pyramid, who have no eyes, no ears, for the honest souls, the homely talk, to be found every morning at their parish pump? Wonders lie at our feet; but with at once the ambition and the folly of wisdom, we cock our noses in the air, looking loftily abroad for far-off miracles!

The present time is, fortunately, most auspicious for our task. In our day, when so many public structures, from the florid cathedral to the unpretending gallows' tree, have their histories written, or, what is much better, invented; when legends are made to hang, like ivy, from every church, and sprout and blossom like stone-crop in the chinks of every gaol; when men and women are improved upon Nature's model, being often rendered a much superior article for public consumption: at such a genial time, we enter upon our little history, with a sustaining assurance that Aldgate Pump, though, indeed, a modest, unobtrusive edifice, may claim some

attention with the more magnificent, yet, withal, melancholy structures, that have been still further recommended to the world's notice by the benevolent spirit of romance; that have been enriched and decorated by the lovely arabesque of many-coloured fiction. Besides, Aldgate Pump, with its colossal rivals, hath a hero!

With this little preface, at once supplicatory and apologetic—petitioning for attention, yet blushing for the poverty of its claims—we narrate our Legend.

The —0th of July, in the year of Our Lord —0, was a red-hot day. Never, since the sun shone, had he made himself so strikingly conspicuous: never manifested his power with such unmitigable wrath. Man and beast, metals and stones, confessed his rage; and the broad Thames shrank into a hissing rivulet. Great were the wonders of that day! There was silence throughout the city; here and there was seen a passenger, desperately roasting as he crawled; here and there a beggar steaming in his rags; but the worthy people who had houses sat within them, mute and patient as butchers' joints in ovens, sat and smoked! Death alone was able to labour, for he sweated not, but worked in his skeleton. He alone fainted not, but stepped, with the graceful jerk of a dancing master, from house to house, though his scythe, like ordeal ploughshare, glowed scarlet hot, and the sands in his glass were vitrified into a lump! Many melted beneath his iron. Old Jabez Muck, scrivener and money-dealer of Saint Mary Axe, was found dead in his bed; dead and curiously branded. A hundred and more golden Jacobuses, hoarded near his heart, had burned through their leather prison, and the corpse of the miser was found, branded on the breast with the felonious mark of wickedly-begotten wealth. The hangman had not stamped a clearer impress. He was carried, with the mint-mark upon him, to his grave. Charon himself, ferrying Muck over Styx, pulled with a polite stroke, for he saw that his passenger had died worth money!

But who shall tell—what volume can contain—the accidents, the evils, of that —0th of July, in the year

of Our Lord —0 ? Fifty honest money-lenders, a score or two of irreproachable men of law, were bankrupt and undone by that transcendent heat. Skins of parchment were shrivelled in iron boxes, burnt, past the art of perjury, or even of law, to make fair again. Long-lost manors flew back to their first owners, and the nightmare, Mortgage, was scared from the breast of groaning industry. Two money-changers, from that day, renounced the wicked vanities of the world, struck, for the first time, with a fear of what heat could and *might* be.

Dogs, of course, went mad ; but, happily, were too lazy to bite.

Sparrows, flying in the sun, fell upon the earth, noisome lumps of burnt feathers.

These, a few of the minor horrors, the lesser evils of the day, we have laid before the cursory reader (referring the deeper student to the chronicles of the time), that we might by them indicate the enlarged importance of Aldgate Pump ! On such a day, the Pump was, to the eyes of the parishioners of Aldgate, even as the minarets of Mecca to the infidel pilgrim. What a soul of bounty gushed with the spring ! What music in the creaking handle ! And what a crowd of yelling, fainting, scrambling, trembling petitioners for the luxury of cold water ! Buckets, tubs, pans, mugs, pots, pipkins, were ranged and thrust about the pump, around that life-bestowing presence.

It was on this day, close to Aldgate Pump, that Peter Honeyman and Marmaduke Griffin met, for the first time, for twenty-five years. They had been early friends, sworn companions. Fortune, at the outset, had favoured Peter ; but Marmaduke began life with an empty purse and a plodding brain. Peter was born a traveller : a golden chain had not bound him to his counter, where he might have fattened, a sleek tradesman. No; he must see the Mogul face to face ; he must hear the phœnix sing ; must behold the wild unicorn on its native plains ; and must choose for himself the pearls and diamonds, which, upon the best authority, were to be

had for the picking up on the highways of Cathay. He would renounce the bondage of trade, and see the wonders of the world. He would, at least, enrich his eyes, though his pocket should stint for it. With this resolution, Peter had no other care than speedily to rid himself of his shop and his stock; and, leaving duller wights to get fat and die in the precincts of their native parish, to take ship for the marvellous East. Happily, he had not far to seek for a friend to help him ship himself. Marmaduke Griffin, with many commendations of the spirit of Peter, professed himself ready to become the steward of his friend; to look to his stock and trade with a more delicate anxiety than he would condescend to bestow upon his own dealings; and more, offered, with tears in his eyes, to make a vow to all the saints to return a just account of every penny spent and made pending the pilgrimage of Peter Honeyman.

'Never talk of it—never think of it, Marmaduke; don't I know you?' said Peter, with a hearty slap on Griffin's shoulder, and looking cordially into his face.

'But I might cheat you; I say, I might, you know,' observed Griffin; and, from his look, tone, and manner, the uncharitable might have deemed such social accident as not the least probable event.

'I'm not fit for the calling,' said Peter; ''twould waste to nothing in my hands: now you, Marmaduke, are a sharp, thrifty varlet; you'll double the stock in no time. So, you see, till I've had my fling—for I was never fashioned to duck my head and make a leg to a customer—you shall be my steward: all I want is, means to see the world; and, for the rest, why, if I chance to marry some princess of the Mogul country'—

'She might make a worse match than Peter Honeyman,' cried the politic Marmaduke.

'Why, then, all that remains is yours. 'Tis a bargain, eh?' and, with little more ceremony, Marmaduke Griffin, then almost penniless, became installed in the shop of Peter, who, fearing both the ridicule and the resentment of friends and neighbours, kept this wild purpose a secret from everybody, save Marmaduke;

a precaution mightily applauded by that most disinterested friend.

Great was the astonishment throughout Aldgate, when Master Marmaduke Griffin stood, with the smug, satisfied air of a master, at the shop-door of Peter Honeyman! For some days the tale was not believed. What! throw away, like a prodigal, a thriving business! Become an outcast, a wandering vagabond, when fortune, to say nothing of parish honours, were at his fingers' ends! The more suspicious of the neighbours looked gravely at Marmaduke, and then, among one another, whispered of foul play; nay, some boldly ventured to hint at midnight murder, whilst others insinuated kidnapping as the lighter offence against the politic Griffin, who suffered them to talk and accuse as they would; their gossip broke not his rest; no, every night he slept soundly in the best bed of the exile Peter, and every morning took his stand behind the counter, with a look of growing prosperity, with that self-satisfied air which marks the man determined to be rich.

As Peter Honeyman, at the time of his departure, owed no man a groat, his absence was soon forgotten; or only noted by some of the neighbours as a text for an essay on his evil qualities. It was plain that he was a spendthrift, and had flown in the face of fortune. He would live to want a crust, was the fixed opinion of many of his former friends; whilst others expressed their meek belief, that he would most certainly die in a ditch. Now Marmaduke, who, by the very disgrace of former poverty, had been considered a dangerous and disreputable fellow, became mightily advanced in the charitable imaginations of the good people of Aldgate; not a few of whom so far forgot an ancient prejudice as to canvass his increasing merits for the post of son-in-law. In less than a twelvemonth after the departure of Peter, Marmaduke was free to choose from among six buxom virgins of Aldgate, all of them further recommended to the gracious consideration of a lover by the advantage of a most bountiful dower. Marmaduke was not made of the material of Magog; hence,

he became irremediably in love with the richest virgin of the six, and, to the enduring consternation of the other five, married her. Now did all things prosper tenfold with Marmaduke! His shop—yes, *his* shop was thronged from morn to night; he added warehouse to warehouse; he bought first the quarter, then the half share, then the whole of a ship; and throughout the City of London Marmaduke Griffin's name was a voucher for thousands.

In the mean time, what became of our traveller, Peter? He had been twice sold to slavery—twice redeemed; had been bastinadoed, caged, fettered; left for months to pine in a dungeon; at times a victim to hunger, thirst, poverty, and the plague. Nevertheless, Peter did not repine, for he had seen the world. His friend, Marmaduke, had twice sent his ransom from captivity; and though for the past fifteen years Peter complained that he had heard no tidings of him—had received no word in answer to his many letters—for all that, all would be well; Marmaduke would prove a just steward; yes, he was so good, so true a friend!

We may here observe that Peter did Marmaduke injustice; for, upon his own avowal, he had written many missives to Peter, at the court of the Mogul—Peter was, unhappily, at the time, somewhere in Japan—assuring him that all the trade of London was ruined, and that his stock in Aldgate, in particular, had suffered the most decisive destruction. He, Marmaduke, had been able to save a little of his own; but Peter must reconcile himself to the unsavoury truth, that he was, beyond all hope, a beggar. Hence, Marmaduke counselled Peter that he had better stay with the Mogul than come back to exhibit his rags to the hard-hearted scoffers of Aldgate.

As Peter, however, failed to receive this goodly advice, he turned his steps towards England. He had seen the world; and he would return and set up his staff at his paternal fireside, and lay his bones under the church of Aldgate.

'For the love of all the saints—give me the jug; let me drink!'

Such were the words, shrieked by a half-naked man, on the —0th of July, in the year of Our Lord —0. His face was burnt and haggard, his hair hung about his ears, and a black thick beard sprouted from his chin. The man had forced his way into the mob that was gathered about Aldgate's Pump, and now prayed, and now screamed for water. None heeded him, but filled their vessels and departed.

'A draught from thy pipkin—'tis a red-hot broil,' cried a citizen, pulling up his horse near the Pump, and holding forth his hand to one who recognised him as the richest clothier in Aldgate. Already the tradesman had the water to his lips, when the stranger sprang towards him.

'Marmaduke—friend—Marmaduke—water—water, for the love of the saints—you know me—water!' cried the man, frenzied with thirst.

Marmaduke took the jug from his lips, his face blackened, and a tremor stirred his burly frame, as he looked down upon the petitioner—upon his old, his early friend. Then, with the rage of a demon, he rose a moment in the stirrup, and grasping the stone jug levelled it at the skull of Peter: he fell like a corpse to the earth, and Marmaduke, spurring his horse, dashed wildly from the spot.

Peter died, and already the sheriff sought the house of Marmaduke Griffin. A burning fever saved the clothier from the hands of the hangman. For three days he lay in madness, shouting for water, and so passed away.

Marmaduke Griffin died, and was buried; but for two hundred years and more his thirsty ghost was doomed to pump from midnight to cock-crow at Aldgate Pump; and still the stream was stopped; though still the wan, feverish spectre hooted, dismally as an owl, 'Water! water!'

Let the ingrate read our legend, and be converted.

IDOLATRY OF THE ENGLISH

YES, we are a nation of Idolaters! We, who send forth missionaries, and freight ships to all corners of the earth with Bibles—we, who in the self-complacency of our knowledge, in the universality of our benevolence, groan over the darkness, and administer to the dearest wants of the heathen—we worship a set of idols, hug them to our hearts, fence them about with all the rites of a degrading superstition; and being, in our own conceit, the most wise, the least prejudiced, the noblest people of the world, are in very fact—we repeat it—a nation of Idolaters! Hard words these, to be flung at poor John Bull! Bitter syllables to be forced upon the palate of excellent John! who, with a most deprecating look, and shaking his ears at the wickedness of the slander, protests that he is the pattern animal of the earth—that he fears heaven—honours the Queen—pays his taxes—loves his neighbour—and defies the Pope. John an Idolater! Why, he regularly goes to church; has a most respectable pew in the most respectable part of the building; makes his Easter offering; and has been known to subscribe hard money for the conversion of the Israelite. And John an Idolater!

In the island of Ceylon—we have the story on the reputation of trustworthy travellers—were certain pagans, who paid worship to an ape's tooth—a tooth 'shrined in gold and precious gems.' In 1554, the pious Portuguese laid violent hands upon the abomination; whereupon many Indian kings offered hundreds of thousands of golden ducats to ransom the relic from the pollution of the infidel. The Portuguese Viceroy pondered on the offer; when the religious Don Gaspar, Archbishop of Goa, dissuaded him from giving ear to the proposal, saying, 'that they, being Christians, ought not to give it them again; being a thing wherein idola-

try might be furthered, and the devil worshipped: but rather were bound by their profession to root out and abolish all idolatry and superstition. By this means the Viceroy was persuaded to change his mind, and flatly denied the ambassadors' request; having in their presence first burnt the ape's tooth, the ashes whereof he caused to be thrown into the sea.' This, it would be thought, was a death-blow to dental idolatry. Not so: for a certain Indian priest had a vision, in which he learned that a spirit had taken away the real tooth from the Portuguese, leaving a counterfeit in its place to be burned. This the heathens presently believed: 'whereupon,' concludes the history, 'this tooth was holden and kept in the same honour and estimation as the other that was burnt had been.'

And John Bull, liberal and enlightened as he is, can make an idol of an ape's tooth; can make his moral majesty kneel to it; can, with the barbarians of Ceylon, invest the thing with miraculous properties—*if the tooth be made of gold.* Fit up an ouran outan with a complete set of teeth from the mines of Peru; let the brute, whenever it shall smile, snarl, or chatter, expose a double row of glittering gold, and the ape shall be ducked to as a paragon of beauty; its grimace shall be majesty; its gibberings shall be music. How many apes are at this moment worshipped only for their golden teeth! How many hats fly off, how many backs bend, to incisors and grinders of precious metal! How often does simple, high-minded, magnanimous, money-loving John, stand all abashed, his soul concentrated in his breeches' pocket—his faculties rapt, spell-bound, by the radiant flash of gold!

'I can buy you and sell you, too!' is the frequent boast of John, piqued by the impertinence or independence of his antagonists. In that vaunt he feels—his heart thrills with the impulse—the greatness of a superior nature. The bipeds about him shrink and fall from the high standard of a common humanity, and become to him, in his mind's eye—or rather, in his pocket's eye, the pockets of some men being indeed

gifted like Argus—mere goods and chattels—things of his own by the grace of ready-money. He is, of all, the most triumphant slave-huckster. There is the difference of colour—the violent opposition of black and white—to still any rising qualm in the breast of the fair-skinned man-dealer, with the thought, the hope, at least the prejudice, of a superior nature; but when John Bull exclaims to Bulls as white and fair as he, 'I can buy you and sell you, too!' he at once reduces them in thought to abject beggary, and out of their very rags makes to himself a robe of maintenance. Yes; John feels sublimated by the thought of being able to buy his neighbours. With a mighty slap at his breeches' pocket, the guineas therein jingle, and then, indeed, he 'feels the divinity stir within him.'

'Money makes the man!' The animal is not to be considered in relation to its wondrous origin and solemn destination, but with reference to its cash-box and bank account. There is no baptism like that of Pactolus. The true glory of his species is not the being whose imagination is winged for the stars, but he whose wit is sharpened for all encounters of the mart. More profitable, more ennobling is it to wash in sand and mud for gold-dust, than to search the heavens for the discovery of far-off worlds! Gold in the pocket is a tangible thing; you can handle it—can hear the music of its sound; it speaks with the tongue of an angel to the heart of its idolater, and assures him of his true pre-eminence. Hence, the equivocal reputation of the mere man of genius; hence, the full glory of the man of yellow metal.

It is of this metal that we make our social idol. To it we sacrifice the odour of our souls—the myrrh and frankincense of human life. Our faculties once narrowed to the consideration of its grim beauty, our eyes become horny to the prodigal magnificence of the world about us—our ears adder-deaf to the anthems of rejoicing nature—our hearts pulseless as mummies to the hearts of the heretic, whose faith is not of guineas, whose thoughts grope not, darkling, in the mine.

With the true instinct of bigotry, the greater our devotion to the idol—the more successful our profession of the religion of the pocket, the less charitable our thoughts towards those who kneel not to our shrine, or having vainly toiled and prayed, remain unblessed by the false god. Hence, with what zeal do we denounce the sons of poverty! With what an acute sense of their unseemliness do we step away from the contact of rags; with what supercilious eyebrow do we consider the ignominy of want; with what loathing, the leprosy of the poor! We toil, and cog, and scramble for God's gifts, and he whose better strength or better fortune makes him the greater possessor—he who clutches the greater handful is, in his own soul, justified, by such possession, in his contempt of his less fortunate brother. With these idolaters everything may be converted into something profitable, save and except the human heart. To study its emotions—to be alive to its appealing sympathies—to know its powers for good and evil—to consider its relationship, if beating in the breast of misery and want, to the millions of hearts touched into music by the hand of God, and throbbing for the one eternal home—to learn and feel this, is, with the pagans of the money-bag, to waste the hours of a spendthrift, to feel only the emptiness of most unprofitable folly.

In the commerce of these idolaters what is the mere, the naked human heart? There is, of course—it is readily taken upon trust—some adroit piece of machinery in every man that is the spring of motion; that sends forth the current of life; that enables the human animal to walk from counting-house to warehouse—from warehouse to the bank; there is, it is allowed, some such clever piece of clockwork, and it is called the heart. What more is, with the world's idolaters, known of it? What *can* be known of it? Who that would thrive would seek to know more—would lose his time, and the golden-minted fruits of time, pondering the film-drawn theories of fools and philosophers? Men of business know better.

It is from this knowledge—from the hollow insolence

of this worldly wisdom—that we have the idolatry of the pocket; it is out of this sordidness of soul that we have created a false god; that here in England, in wise, benevolent, and merry England, we knock our foreheads upon the earth before the sacred shrine of gold. Happy and respectable—yea, most respectable—the man who may, unquestioned, worship there—a thriving believer! Miserable wretch, who may not say his orisons even at the door of the temple!

The homage duly paid to the idolater who hath pursed up reasons for his faith, begets tens of thousands of false worshippers; who, zealous to be received among the blessed of Plutus, invest themselves with hypocrisy as with a robe, and swagger to the shrine with a seeming happiness. They put on a prosperous look—thank their idol for the grace of good luck—and, adapting themselves to the superstitious observances of the ready-money faithful, pass, for a time, as thriving believers. In the train of these, crowd Lying and Deceit, and Brazen Impudence; and yet the very hypocrites, the very dissimulaters of the faith, declare the worldly use, the social glory of the creed.

And will the idol remain? Will the grim iniquity that calls about it worshippers, whose most acceptable offerings are selfishness of soul, ignorance, a foolish misinterpretation of the true wisdom, the true goodness of human life—will it continue, a social abomination, a wickedness, scourging the land? No: its downfall is prophesied; its destruction is assured. Two principles are at work: the one, wild, savage from a sense of wrong—unreflecting—revengeful from inflicted misery—goaded by scorn—branded with contumely. The other, mighty in its loftiness of purpose—persuasive in the beauty of its doctrine—convincing in its knowledge—and most triumphant in the meekness of exalted humanity. It is these two principles that menace the idol. May it fall—and our faith is great that it will do so—an annihilated victim to the nobler power!

A sense of wrong, of injustice, is eating like an ulcer into the hearts of men. Poverty is badged and spurned

by the false worshippers. Shall we suffer the squalid giant to rise in his despair, and with his *Briarean* hands grasp madly at the pillars of the social fabric? Shall we wait until we *must* oppose the force of wrong to the force of want? We have preached it, illustrated the heartless dogma by a thousand petty tyrannies, a thousand bitter sneers, that wealth is the truest standard of humanity; and we have, with many-voiced exhortation, called upon the world 'to bow down and worship it.' We *do* worship it, to the glorification of our own selfishness—to a forgetfulness of the poor—nay, to a doubt, an incredulousness of their common nature.

Here, then, is a task for human genius—here, a mission for human energy. To preach the better faith, to go among the idolaters, the heathens of Mammon, and tearing from them their blinding self-complacency, to make them see the haggard face of humanity—to make them feel its wounds—to open their sealed ears to its groans, its cries, its complaints of wrong; its aspirations for better feelings; and more, its wishes for that kindliness of intercourse, that daily bounty—nothing for man to bestow, yet much for man to receive. Be it understood, we have no plan, no hope to turn this world into Arcadia; we do not so much as dream of allotting to the poor the gardens of the Hesperides. All we ask is, that thin-faced, hungry poverty, shall not pine in sight of the golden fruit: solaced by the humanity of the idolatrous owner, that '*Man-traps and spring-guns are set within.*'

We have too long considered the poor as the lumber of the earth. Let us now begin to reflect that of them are the future inhabitants of heaven.

THE TWO WINDOWS

The Union Workhouse of the ancient parish of Herne—how calm and pastoral is that little nook of Kent! has two outward windows. The fabric, built by the inspiration of the New Poor-law, was a blind, eyeless piece of brickwork; a gaol for the iniquity and perseverance of poverty; a Newgate for the felony of want. The chiefs and elders of Parliament had said, 'Let us make abiding-places for the poor; let us separate them, lepers as they are, from the clean; let us shut them up from the sight of the green earth; let them not behold the work of the season in the budding trees, in their leafy branches, in their red and golden robes of autumn, in the gaunt bareness of solemn winter. Let the grass spring and the wild-flower blossom; but let not the poor, the unclean of the land, look upon the work of God.' After this resolve the Union was built; with inner windows looking upon walls, and walls turned blank upon the outward world. No crevice, no loophole permitted captive poverty a look, a glimpse of the fresh face of nature; his soul, like his body, was bricked up according to statute; he had by the insolence of destitution offended the niceness of the world, and he was doomed by his judges to a divorce from the commonest rights of earth. Hence, the Union Workhouse turned its sullen, unbroken wall of brick upon the fields and trees, and the pauper was made to look only upon pauperism. The freshness and luxuriance of nature—her prodigal loveliness—was not for his eyes; he was poor, and even to behold the plenteousness of the teeming earth was an enjoyment beyond his state—a banned delight—a luxury which those who paid for his food could not properly vouchsafe him!

At length—when they themselves know it not, men's

hearts will work, a sense of right will sometimes steal upon their sleep, an instinct of goodness will, like silver water from the rock, gush forth—at length it was resolved by the guardians of the poor—guardians of the poor! what a holiness of purpose should inform those well-worn syllables—that the dull, blind, squalid workhouse should have light; that its brick walls should be pierced with two windows; that the fields and trees should gladden pauper eyes, appealing to old recollections; childhood thoughts; daily, customary feelings. It was determined that the pauper prisoner should, through the iron bars of penury, have comforting glimpses of God's goodness without; that he should, though all unconsciously, make offerings upon the green altar of the earth; that his heart should commune, in its own unknowing way, with those sweet influences, which, coming from God, discourse in some manner to all men.

And so it was determined that the Union Workhouse should have two outward windows. The guardians of the poor appeared with the labourers. 'Here,' said the guardians, 'break through the wall; here pierce one window—here, another.' Then turning to the paupers, some few age-stricken folks, they said, with smug complacency, 'We are going to give you some light.' And this, reader, is not a goosequill fiction; it is a thing of truth.

'We are going to give you some light.' We cannot help it, if this liberal goodness—this gentle philanthropy—drive back thought to the first gift of light; if it call up, as with an iron tongue, the memory of the holy birth of light, word-begotten, of all men. And the nature of man, solemnised by such memories—kindled and uplifted, skies beyond expression, by the sublime inheritance—is it not a hard task to consider with composure even the compunction of a guardian of the poor, who pierces with two windows the prison-house of the pauper to let God's light in? May not the small authority of man be sometimes as a blaspheming burlesque of Almighty Beneficence?

Let us, for a time forgetful of state philosophy—forgetful of the plausibilities of social prosperity that set the poor apart from the rich and well-to-do, as creatures somewhat different in the real drama of life, although on certain occasions, as it were for form's sake, for Christian ceremony, allowed to be made from the clay of the same Eden as their masters—let us behold the earth in its freshness, and man, its owner, in the vigour of his new birth, the heir of an impartial Providence, and the receiver of its glories; and then consider him as the task-master of his fellow, as the grudging churl that metes out light and air to his helpless brother; and for this sole cause—this one bitter reason—he *is* helpless.

A miserable sight—a hideous testimony of the thankfulness of prosperous man—is the rural union, with its blank dead wall of brick; a cold, blind thing, the work of human perversity and human selfishness, amidst ten thousand thousand evidences of Eternal bounty. How beautiful is the beauty of God around it! There is not a sapling waving its green tresses of June that does not make the heart yearn with kindliness; not a field-flower that does not, with its speaking eye, tell of abundant goodness; the brook is musical with the same sweet truth; all sights and sounds declare it. The liberal loveliness of nature, turn where we will, looks upon and whispers to us. We are made the heirs of wealth inexhaustible, of pleasures deep as the sea and pure as the joys of Paradise. And our return for this, our offering to the wretchedness of our fellow creatures, is yonder prison, with its dead wall turned upon the pleasant aspects of nature, lest the pauper captives within should behold what God has done for the world, in which, according to the world's justice, they have nothing. Hence is the pauper treated, in his blind dungeon, as though there was a felonious purpose in his eyesight; as though, a prisoner in the union, he would commit larceny on the meads and trees, and all the rural objects that from babyhood have been familiar to him, to the exceeding injury and loss of the free folks,

who, by the blessing of skill and good luck, have ' land and beeves.'

We know not a more fantastic tyranny, a more wilful assertion of the arrogance of man, than this needless shutting up of his poorer brother in a gaol of poverty—barring his eyes of every comforting object, compelling him to look only upon that which at every look speaks to his soul of his miserable dependence upon his richer fellow; which denies to him the innocent, unbought glimpse of out-door nature, as though the scene was a land of promise from which his beggary had made him alien. Is human want so wicked that it should be unblessed with even a glance at the pleasant things of creation ? Has the pauper—because pauper —no further claim upon the earth, save for his final bed—the grave ? The rustic unions, with their forlorn blank walls, cry, yes !

If God punish man for crime, as man punishes man for poverty, woe to the sons of Adam !

THE FOLLY OF THE SWORD

May we ask the reader to behold with us a melancholy show—a saddening, miserable spectacle? We will not take him to a prison, a workhouse, a Bedlam, where human nature expiates its guiltiness, its lack of worldly goods, its most desolate perplexity; but we will take him to a wretchedness, first contrived by wrong and perpetrated by folly. We will show him the embryo mischief that in due season shall be born in the completion of its terror, and shall be christened with a sounding name—Folly and wickedness standing its sponsors.

We are in St. James's Park. The royal standard of England burns in the summer air—the Queen is in London. We pass the Palace, and in a few paces are in Birdcage Walk. There, reader, is the miserable show we promised you. There are some fifty recruits, drilled by a sergeant to do homicide, killingly, handsomely. In Birdcage Walk Glory sits upon her eggs, and hatches eagles!

How very beautiful is the sky above us! What a blessing comes with the fresh, quick air! The trees, drawing their green beauty from the earth, quicken our thoughts of the bounteousness of this teeming world. Here in this nook, this patch, where we yet feel the vibrations of surrounding London—even here Nature, constant in her beauty, blooms and smiles, uplifting the heart of man—if the heart be his to own her.

Now, look aside and contemplate God's image with a musket. Your bosom duly expanding with gratitude to nature for the blessings she has heaped upon you, behold the crowning glory of God's work managed, like a machine, to slay the image of God—to stain the teeming earth with homicidal blood—to fill the air with

howling anguish! Is not yonder row of clowns a melancholy sight? Yet are they the sucklings of Glory —the baby mighty ones of a future *Gazette*. Reason beholds them with a deep pity. Imagination magnifies them into fiends of wickedness. There is carnage about them—carnage, and the pestilential vapour of the slaughtered. What a fine-looking thing is war! Yet dress it as we may, dress and feather it, daub it with gold, huzza it and sing swaggering songs about it—what is it, nine times out of ten—but murder in uniform? Cain, taken the sergeant's shilling?

And now we hear the fifes and drums of her Majesty's Grenadiers. They pass on the other side; and a crowd of idlers, their hearts jumping to the music, their eyes dazzled, and their feelings perverted, hang about the march and catch the infection—the love of glory! And true wisdom thinks of the world's age, and sighs at its slow advance in all that really dignifies man—the truest dignity being the truest love for his fellow. And then hope, and faith in human progress, contemplate the pageant, its real ghastliness disguised by outward glare and frippery, and know the day will come when the symbols of war will be as the sacred beasts of old Egypt—things to mark the barbarism of bygone war; melancholy records of the past perversity of human nature.

We can imagine the deep-chested laughter—the look of scorn which would annihilate, and then the smile of compassion—of the man of war at this, the dream of folly and the wanderings of an inflamed brain. Yet, oh, man of war! at this very moment are you shrinking, withering like an aged giant. The fingers of Opinion have been busy at your plume—you are not the feathered thing you were; and then that little tube, the goose quill, has sent its silent shot into your huge anatomy; and the corroding INK, even whilst you look at it, and think it shines so brightly, is eating with a tooth of rust into your sword.

That a man should kill a man and rejoice in the deed —nay, gather glory from it—is the act of a wild animal.

The force of muscle and the dexterity of limb which make the wild man a conqueror are deemed, in savage life, man's highest attributes. The creature whom, in the pride of our Christianity, we call heathen and spiritually desolate, has some personal feeling in the strife—he kills his enemy, and then, making an oven of hot stones, bakes his dead body, and, for crowning satisfaction, eats it. His enemy becomes a part of him; his glory is turned to nutriment; and he is content. What barbarism! Field-marshals sicken at the horror; nay, troopers shudder at the tale, like a fine lady at a toad.

In what, then, consists the prime evil? In the murder, or in the meal? Which is the most hideous deed—to kill a man, or to cook and eat the man when killed?

But, softly, there is no murder in the case. The craft of man has made a splendid ceremony of homicide—has invested it with dignity. He slaughters with flags flying, drums beating, trumpets braying. He kills according to method, and has worldly honours for his grim handiwork. He does not, like the unchristian savage, carry away with him mortal trophies from the skulls of his enemies. No, the alchemy and magic of authority turns his well-won scalps into epaulets, or hangs them in stars and crosses at his button-hole; and then, the battle over, the dead not eaten, but carefully buried—and the maimed and mangled howling and blaspheming in hospitals—the meek Christian warrior marches to church, and reverently folding his sweet and spotless hands, sings *Te Deum*. Angels wave his fervent thanks to God, to whose footstool—in his own faith—he has so lately sent his shuddering thousands. And this spirit of destruction working within him is canonised by the craft and ignorance of man and worshipped as glory!

And this religion of the sword—this dazzling heathenism, that makes a pomp of wickedness—seizes and distracts us even on the threshold of life. Swords and drums are our baby playthings; the types of violence

and destruction are made the pretty pastimes of our childhood; and as we grow older, the outward magnificence of the ogre Glory—his trappings and his trumpets, his privileges, and the songs that are shouted in his praise—ensnare the bigger baby to his sacrifice. Hence slaughter becomes an exalted profession; the marked, distinguished employment of what in the jargon of the world is called a gentleman.

But for this craft operating upon this ignorance, who—in the name of outraged God—would become the hireling of the Sword? Hodge, poor fellow, enlists. He wants work; or he is idle, dissolute. Kept, by the injustice of the world, as ignorant as the farmyard swine, he is the better instrument for the world's craft. His ear is tickled with the fife and drum; or he is drunk; or the sergeant—the lying valet of glory—tells a good tale, and already Hodge is a warrior in the rough. In a fortnight's time you may see him at Chatham; or indeed he was one of those we marked in Birdcage Walk. Day by day the sergeant works at the block ploughman, and, chipping and chipping, at length carves out a true, handsome soldier of the line. What knew Hodge of the responsibility of man? What dreams had he of the self-accountability of the human spirit? He is become the lackey of carnage, the liveried footman, at a few pence per day, of fire and blood. The musket-stock, which for many an hour he hugs—hugs in sulks and weariness—was no more a party to its present use than was Hodge. That piece of walnut is the fragment of a tree that might have given shade and fruit for another century; homely, rustic people gathering under it. Now it is the instrument of wrong and violence; the working tool of slaughter. Tree and man, are not their destinies as one?

And is Hodge alone of benighted mind? Is he alone deficient of that knowledge of moral right and wrong which really and truly crowns the man king of himself? When he surrenders up his nature, a mere machine with human pulses to do the bidding of war, has he taken counsel with his own reflection—does he know

the limit of the sacrifice ? He has taken his shilling, and knows the facings of his uniform !

When the born and bred gentleman, to keep to coined and current terms, pays down his thousand pounds or so for his commission, what incites to the purchase ? It may be the elegant idleness of the calling ; it may be the bullion and glitter of the regimentals ; or, devout worshipper, it may be an unquenchable thirst for glory. From the moment when his name stars the *Gazette*, what does he become ? The bond-servant of war ! Instantly he ceases to be a judge between moral right and moral injury. It is his duty not to think, but to obey. He has given up, surrendered to another the freedom of his soul : he has dethroned the majesty of his own will. He must be active in wrong, and see not the injustice : shed blood for craft and usurpation, calling bloodshed valour. He may be made, by the iniquity of those who use him, a burglar and a brigand ; but glory calls him pretty names for his prowess, and the wicked weakness of the world shouts and acknowledges him. And is this the true condition of reasonable man ? Is it by such means that he best vindicates the greatness of his mission here ? Is he when he most gives up the free motions of his own soul—is he then most glorious ?

A few months ago chance showed us a band of ruffians who, as it afterwards appeared, were intent upon most desperate mischief. They spread themselves over the country, attacking, robbing, and murdering all who fell into their hands. Men, women, and children all suffered alike. Nor were the villains satisfied with this. In their wanton ruthlessness they set fire to cottages, and tore up and destroyed plantations. Every footpace of their march was marked with blood and desolation.

Who were these wretches ? you ask. What place did they ravage ? Were they not caught and punished ?

They were a part of the army of Africa ; valorous Frenchmen, bound for Algiers to cut Arab throats ; and, in the name of glory, and for the everlasting glory

of France, to burn, pillage, and despoil; and all for national honour—all for glory!

But Glory cannot dazzle Truth. Does it not at times appear no otherwise than a highwayman with a pistol at a nation's breast? a burglar with a crowbar entering a kingdom? Alas! in this world there is no Old Bailey for nations, otherwise where would have been the crowned heads that divided Poland? Those felon monarchs anointed to—steal? It is true the historian claps the cutpurse conqueror in the dock, and he is tried by the jury of posterity. *He* is past the verdict, yet is not its damnatory voice lost upon generations? For thus is the world taught—albeit slowly taught—true glory; when that which passed for virtue is truly tested to be vile; when the hero is hauled from the car and fixed for ever in the pillory.

But war brings forth the heroism of the soul: war tests the magnanimity of man. Sweet is the humanity that spares a fallen foe; gracious the compassion that tends his wounds, that brings even a cup of water to his burning lips. Granted. But is there not a heroism of a grander mould—the heroism of forbearance? Is not the humanity that refuses to strike a nobler virtue than the late pity born of violence? Pretty is it to see the victor with salve and lint kneeling at his bloody trophy—a maimed and agonised fellow man; but surely it had been better to withhold the blow than to have been first mischievous, to be afterwards humane.

That nations professing a belief in Christ should couple glory with war is monstrous blasphemy. Their faith, their professing faith, is—'Love one another'; their practice is to—cut throats; and more, to bribe and hoodwink men to the wickedness, the trade of blood is magnified into a virtue. We pray against battle, and glorify the deeds of death. We say beautiful are the ways of peace, and then cocker ourselves upon our perfect doings in the art of man-slaying. Let us then cease to pay the sacrifice of admiration to the demon—War; let us not acknowledge him as a mighty

and majestic principle, but, at the very best, a grim and melancholy necessity.

But there always has been—there always will be—war. It is inevitable; it is a part of the condition of human society. Man has always made glory to himself from the destruction of his fellow; so it will continue. It may be very pitiable; would it were otherwise! But so it is, and there is no helping it.

Happily we are slowly killing this destructive fallacy. A long breathing time of peace has been fatal to the dread magnificence of glory. Science and philosophy —*povera e nuda filosofia!*—have made good their claims, inducing man to believe that he may vindicate the divinity of his nature otherwise than by perpetrating destruction. He begins to think there is a better glory in the communication of triumphs of the mind than in the clash of steel and the roar of artillery. At the present moment a society, embracing men of distant nations—'natural enemies,' as the old wicked cant of the old patriotism had it—is at work plucking the plumes from Glory, unbracing his armour, and divesting the ogre of all that dazzled foolish and unthinking men, showing the rascal in his natural hideousness, in all his base deformity. Some, too, are calculating the cost of Glory's table: some showing what an appetite the demon has, devouring at a meal the substance of these thousand sons of industry—yea, eating up the wealth of kingdoms. And thus by degrees are men beginning to look upon this god Glory as no more than a finely-trapped Sawney Bean—a monster and a destroyer—a nuisance—a noisy lie.

ELIZABETH AND VICTORIA

EVERY generation compared to the age it immediately succeeds is but a further lapse from Paradise. Every grandfather is of necessity a wiser, kinder, nobler being than the grandson doomed to follow him—every grandmother chaster, gentler, more self-denying, more devoted to the beauty of goodness, than the giddy, vain, thoughtless creature, who in her time is sentenced to be grandmother to somebody, whose still increased defects will only serve to bring out the little lustre of the gentlewoman who preceded her. Man, undoubtedly had at the first a fixed amount of goodness bestowed upon him; but this goodness, by being passed from generation to generation, has, like a very handsome piece of coin, with arms and legend in bold relief, become so worn by continual transit, that it demands the greatest activity of faith to believe that which is now current in the world to be any portion of the identical goodness with which the human race was originally endowed. Hapless creatures are we! Moral paupers of the nineteenth century, turning a shining cheek upon one another, and by the potent force of swagger, passing off our thin, worn, illegible pieces of coin—how often, no thicker, no weightier than a spangle on a player's robe!—when our glorious ancestors, in the grandeur of their goodness, could ring down musical shekels! Nay, as we go back, we find the coin of excellence so heavy, so abounding, that how any man —Samson perhaps excepted—had strength enough to carry his own virtues about him, puzzles the effeminacy of present thought. Folks then were doubtless made grave, majestic in their movements by the very weight of their excellence. Whilst we, poor anatomies—skip-jacks of the nineteenth century—we carry all our ready virtue in either corner of our waistcoat pocket,

and, from its very lightness, are unhappily enabled to act all sorts of unhallowed capers—to forget the true majesty of man in the antics of the mountebank. Forlorn degradation of the human race!

But the tears of the reader—for if he have a heart of flesh, it is by this time melting in his eyes—are not confidently demanded for only the one generation whereof (seeing he is our reader) he is certainly not the worst unit: but we here require of him to weep for posterity; yes, to subscribe a rivulet of tears for the generations to come. The coinage of the virtues at present in circulation among us is so thin, so defaced, so battered, so clipt, that it appears to us wholly impossible that any portion of the currency can descend a couple of generations lower. What, then, is to become of our grandchildren? Without one particle of golden truth and goodness left to them, for we cannot take into account the two or three pieces hoarded—as old ladies have hoarded silver pennies—what remains, what alternative for our descendants but to become a generation of coiners? Can any man withstand the terror of this picture, wherein all the world are shown as so many passers of pocket-pieces, lacquered over with something that seems like gold and silver, but which, indeed, is only seeming? A picture wherein he who is the ablest hypocrite—passing off the greatest amount of false coin upon his neighbour—shall appear the most virtuous person! Is not this an appalling scene to contemplate? Yet, if there be any truth in a common theory, if there be any veracity in the words written in a thousand pages, uttered at every fireside, dropt in the casual meeting of man and man at doorsteps, in by-lanes, highways, and marketplaces—the picture we have shadowed forth must become an iron present.

'We shall never see such times again!'

'The world isn't what it used to be.'

'When I was a boy, things hadn't come to this pass.'

'The world gets wickeder and wickeder.'

Since the builders of Babel were scattered, these thoughts have been voiced in every tongue. From the

very discontent and fantasticalness of his nature, man looks backward at the lost Paradise of another age. He affects to snuff the odour of its fruits and flowers, and with a melancholy shaking of the head, sees, or thinks he sees, the flashing of the fiery swords that guard them. And then, in the restlessness of his heart, in the peevishness and discontent of his soul, he says all sorts of bitter things of the generations he has fallen among; and, from the vanished glory of the past, predicts increasing darkness for the future. Happily, the prophesying cannot be true; and happily, too, for the condition of the prophet, he knows it will not. But then there is a sort of comfort in the waywardness of discontent; at times, a soothing music to the restlessness of the soul in the deep bass of hearty grumbling.

The ingratitude of the act is entirely forgotten in the pleasure. 'Ha! those were the merry days—the golden times of England they were!' May not this be heard from the tradesman, the mechanic, as he is borne past Tilbury Fort, and the thoughts of Queen Elizabeth, of her 'golden days,' ring in his brain; and living only in the nineteenth century, he has some vague, perplexing notion that he has missed an Eden, only by a hundred years or two? He thinks not—why should he?—of the luxury he now purchases for a shilling; a luxury, not compassable in those golden days by all the power and wealth of all the combining sovereigns of the earth, for he is a passenger of a Gravesend steamboat, the fare twelvepence.

We would not forget that wonder of Elizabeth's navy, the *Great Harry*. No; we would especially remember it, to compare the marvel, with all its terrors, to the agent of our day, which, wrought and directed from a few gallons of water, makes the winged ship but as a log—a dead leviathan upon the deep; which, in the certainty and intensity of its power of destruction must, in the fullness of time, make blood-spilling war bankrupt, preaching peace with all men, even from 'the cannon's mouth.'

We are, however, a degenerate race. In our maudlin

sensibility, we have taken under our protection the very brutes of the earth—the fowls of the air—the fish of the sea. We have cast the majesty of the law around the asses of the reign of Victoria—have assured to live geese a property in their own feathers—have, with a touch of tenderness, denounced the wood-plugged claws of the lobsters of Billingsgate. We have a society, whose motto, spiritually, is—

> Never to link our pleasure or our pride
> With suffering of the meanest thing that lives.

Very different, indeed, was the spirit of the English people, when their good and gracious Queen Elizabeth smiled sweetly upon bull dogs, and found national music in the growl, the roar, and the yell of a bear-garden; whereto, in all the courtesy of a nobler and more virtuous age, the sovereign led the French ambassador; that, as chroniclers tell us, Monsieur might arrive at a sort of comparative knowledge of English bravery, judging the courage of the people by the stubborn daring of their dogs.

Then we had no Epsom, with its high moralities—no Ascot, with its splendour and wealth. Great, indeed, was the distance—deep the abyss—between the sovereign and the sovereign people.

And in those merry, golden days of good Queen Bess, rank was something; it had its brave outside, and preached its high prerogative from externals. The nobleman declared his nobility by his cloak, doublet and jerkin; by the plumes in his hat; by the jewels flashing in his shoes. Society, in all its gradations, was inexorably marked by the tailor and goldsmith.

But what is the tailor of the nineteenth century? What doth he for nobility? Alas! next to nothing. The gentleman is no longer the creature of the tailor's hands—the being of his shop-board. The gentleman must dress himself in ease, in affability, in the gentler and calmer courtesies of life, to make distinguishable the nobility of his nature from the homeliness, the vulgarity of the very man who, it may be, finds nobility

in shoe-leather. Thus, gentility of blood, deprived by innovation of its external livery—denied the outward marks of supremacy—is thrown upon its bare self to make good its prerogative. Manner must now do the former duty of fine clothes.

State, too, was in the blessed times of Elizabeth a most majestic matter. The queen's carriage, unlike Victoria's, was a vehicle wondrous in the eyes of men as the chariot of King Pharaoh. Now, does every poor man keep his coach—price sixpence! How does the economy of luxury vulgarise the indulgence?

Travelling was then a grave and serious adventure. The horse-litter was certainly a more dignified means of transit than the fuming, boiling, roaring steam-engine, that rushes forward with a man as though the human anatomy was no more than a woolpack. In the good old times of Queen Bess, a man might take his five long days and more for a hundred miles, putting up, after a week's jolting, at his hostelry, the Queen's Head of Islington, for one good night's rest, ere he should gird up his loins to enter London. Now is man taught to lose all respect for the hoariness of time by the quickness of motion. Now may he pass over two hundred miles in some seven or eight hours if he will, taking his first meal in the heart of Lancashire, and his good-night glass at a Geneva palace in London. Is it wonderful that our present days should abound more in sinful levity than the days of the good Queen Elizabeth, seeing that we may, in the same space of time, crowd so much more iniquity? The truth is, science has thrown so many hours upon our hands, that we are compelled to kill them with all sorts of arrows—which, as moralists declare, have mortal poison at the barb, however gay and brilliant may be the feathers that carry it home. Dreadful will be the time when that subtle fiend, science, shall perform nearly all human drudgery; for then men in their very idleness will have nought else to destroy save their own souls; and the destruction will, of course, be quicker, and, to the father of all mischief, much more satisfactory.

Again, in the good times of Elizabeth, humanity was blessed with a modesty, a deference—in these days of bronze to be vainly sought for—towards the awfulness of power, the grim majesty of authority. And if, indeed, it happened that some outrageous wretch, forgetful of the purpose of nature in creating him the Queen's liegeman, and therefore her property—if, for a moment, he should cease to remember the fealty which, by the principle of the divine right of kings, should be vital to him as the blood in his veins—why, was there not provided for him, by the benignity of custom and the law, a salutary remedy ? If he advanced a new opinion, had he not ears wherewith, by hangman's surgery, he might be cured of such disease ? If he took a mistaken view of the rights of his fellow-subjects, might he not be taught to consider them from a higher point of elevation, and so be instructed ?

Booksellers, in the merry time of Elizabeth, were enabled to vindicate a higher claim to moral and physical daring than is permitted to them in these dull and drivelling days. He who published a book, questioning—though never so gently—the prerogative of her Majesty to do just as the spirit should move her, might have his right hand chopped off, and afterwards—there have been examples of such devotion—wave his bloody stump, with a loyal shout of 'God save the Queen!' But these were merry days—golden days—in which the royal prerogative was more majestic, more awful than in the nineteenth century. And wherefore ? The reason is plain as the Queen's arms.

The king of beasts lives on flesh. His carnivorousness is one of the great elements of his majesty. So was it in the times of Elizabeth, with the Queen's prerogative. It was for the most part fed upon flesh. It would be a curious and instructive calculation could we arrive at the precise number of noses, and arms, and hands, and human heads, and quarters of human carcases, which—during the merry, golden reign of Elizabeth, of those days we shall never see again—were required by law to keep strong and lusty the

prerogative of the Virgin Queen! How, as the human head festered and rotted above the city gates, was the prerogative sweetened by the putrefaction! And then the daily lessons preached by the mute horror of the dead man's mouth, to the human life daily passing beneath it! What precepts of love and gentleness towards all men fell from the shrivelled lips—what Christianity gleamed from the withered eye-balls! How admirably were the every-day thoughts of men associated with prerogative, its majesty for ever preached by dead men's tongues—its beauty visible in dead men's flesh. Those were the golden days—the merry days—we shall never see such times again. Now, a poor and frivolous race, we pass beneath Temple Bar, untaught by the grim moralities that from its height were wont to instruct our forefathers. In the days of Elizabeth we might have lounged at the door of the city shopkeeper, and whilst chaffering for a commodity of this world, have had our thoughts elevated by a consideration of the ghastly skull—grinning a comment upon all earthly vanities—above us. Those days are gone—passed for ever. We have now plate-glass and dainty painting, and precious woods, in the shops of our tradesmen, but nought to take us from the vanity of life—no prerogative of a Virgin Queen, in the useful semblance of a *memento mori*.

It is to the want of such stern yet wholesome monitors we are doubtless to attribute the decay of the national character. We are sunk in effeminacy, withered by the fond ministerings of science. The road of life—which, by its ruggedness, was wont to try the sinews of our Elizabethan ancestors, we,—their degenerate children, have spread as with a carpet, and hung the walls around us with radiant tapestry. The veriest household drudge of our time is a Sardanapalus compared to the lackey of the Virgin Queen. The tatterdemalion, who lives on highway alms, may look down upon the beggar of Elizabeth; for the mendicant of Victoria may, with his prayed-for pence, purchase luxuries unknown to the Dives of former days.

And what—if we listen to complaining patriotism—what is the evil born of this ? A loss of moral energy ; a wasting away of national fibre. Believe this melancholy philosophy, and national weakness came in (a moral moth in the commodity) with silk stockings. Ere then was the bearing of man more majestic in the eyes of angels ! For then was the sword the type of station, a gentleman no more appearing abroad without his rapier than a wasp without its sting. Human life could not but lose part of its dignity with its cold steel. What a fine comment on the charity, the gentleness, the humanity of his fellow-men, did every gentleman wear at his side ! He was, in a manner, his own law-maker, his own executioner. In the judgment of a later philosopher, we are prone to believe that the said gentlemen may appear, at the best, ferocious simpletons —creatures swaggering ' between heaven and earth,' with their hands upon their hilts, ready and yearning for a thrust at those who took the wall of their gentility. Ha ! those, indeed, were the good old days ! And then came a whining, curd-complexioned benevolence, and in progress of time, its thin, white, womanly fingers unbuckled the sword-belt of the bully, and organised police. Sword-makers were bankrupt, and human nature lost a grace !

Thus, it appears, the world has been from age to age declining in virtue, and can only escape the very profound of iniquity by a speedy dissolution. Every half dozen years or so, a prophet growls from a cellar, or cries from the altitude of a garret, the advent of the last day. An earthquake, or some other convulsion (the particulars of which are only vouchsafed to the prophet) is to destroy the earth or London at least ; whereupon old gentlemen remove to Gravesend, and careful housewives take stock of their plate. Now, every such prophecy, instead of bewildering honest people with all sorts of fears, and all sorts of anxieties for their personal property, ought to make them sing thanksgiving songs for the promised blessing. It being the creed of these people that the world gets worse and

worse, they would at least have the comfort to know that they had seen the last of its wickedness. For a moment, reader, we will suppose you one of these. Consider, upon your own faith, what a terrible wretch will necessarily be your great-great-great-great-great-grandson! Well, would it not be satisfaction to you that this dragon (we believe dragons are oviparous) should be crushed in the egg of the future? How would you like your own flesh and blood inevitably changed by the course of time into the anatomy of something very like a demon? You are bad enough as you are; that dismal truth your own humility preaches to you; to say nothing of the plain speaking of your neighbours. No; out of pure love and pity for humanity, you ought to wish all the world to stop with your own pulse. It is hard enough now, even for the best of us, to keep on the respectable side of the statutes; but, with the growing wickedness of the world, we should like to know what sort of metal will the laws be made of. The great social link must inevitably be a fetter.

How often have we stood, with the unseen tears in our eyes, watching the nobility of the land, in nobility's best bib and tucker, winding in golden line to the drawing room of Queen Victoria! Alas! degenerate dukes—faded duchesses! Marquises fallen upon evil times—marchionesses very dim indeed! what are you to the nobility of Elizabeth? What to the grandees of those merry days, the golden shadow of which is brightness itself to the cold, grey glimmering of the present? We have yet one thought to comfort us; and that is, a half belief that the court of Elizabeth was held as nothing to all courts preceding; and so back, until Englishmen mourned over the abomination of cloaks and vests, sorrowing for those golden days, those good old times of the painted Britons! Great was the virtue abounding in *woad*; grievous the wilful iniquity woven in broadcloth.

Queen Elizabeth died—fair, regal bud!—in the sweetness of virginity; and though the sun (by some despairing effort) managed to rise the next morning, it

has never been wholly itself since. She died, and was brought to Whitehall, to the great calamity of the fish then swimming in the river; for a poet of the day, quoted by Camden, has eternised the evil that in the hour fell upon Thames flounders:—

> The Queene was brought by water to Whitehall;
> At every stroke the oares teares let fall;
> More clung about the barge; fish under water
> *Wept out their eyes of pearle, and swame blinde after.*
> I think the bargemen might with easier thighes
> Have rowed her thither in her people's eyes.
> Yet, howsoere, thus much my thoughts have scann'd,
> She'd come by water, had she come by land.

So closed the golden days of Queen Elizabeth; leaving us, in all the virtues and comforts of the world, the bankrupt children of Queen Victoria!

Unworthy is he of the balmy sweetness of this blessed May who can think so! A churlish, foolish, moody traitor to the spirit of goodness and beauty that, as with the bounty of the sun and air, calls up forms of loveliness in his path, and surrounds him with ten thousand household blessings! With active presences, which the poet of Elizabeth in even *his* large love for man could scarce have dreamed of; or, dreaming, seen them as a part of fairy fantasy—a cloud-woven pageant!

Let the man who lives by his daily sweat pause in his toil, and, with his foot upon his spade, watch the white smoke that floats in the distance; listen to the lessening thunder of the engine that, instinct with Volcanic life, has rushed, devouring space, before it. That little curl of smoke hangs in the air a thing of blessed promise—that roar of the engine is the melody of hope to unborn generations. But now, the digger of the soil looks moodily at that vapour, and his heart is festering with the curse upon the devil Steam; that fiend that grinds his bones beneath the wheels of British Juggernaut. Poor creature! The seeming demon in a beneficent presence that, in the ripeness of time, will work regeneration of the hopes of men.

Let the poor man—the mechanic of a town—look around him. Let him in his own house, humble though it be, acknowledge the presence of a thousand comforts which, had he lived two centuries ago, he could not with a baron's wealth have purchased. Not mere creature enjoyments; but humanizing, refining pleasures, drawing man nearer to man, expanding the human heart, and imparting to humanity the truest greatness in the greatest gentleness.

'What!' it may be asked, 'can you have the hardihood, or the ignorance, to vaunt these days above the days of Elizabeth? These days with famine throwing the shuttle—with ignorance, wholly brutish, digging in the pit—with gold, a monster all brain, and so the very worst of monsters—dominating throughout the land, and crushing the pulses of thousands within its hard, relentless grasp? Would you not rather pray for a return of those merry, merry days, when men were whipped, imprisoned, branded, burnt, at little more than the mere will of Majesty, for mere opinion—but who had, nevertheless, bacon and bread and ale sufficient to the day?'

No; we would go no step backward, but many in advance; our faith still increasing in the enlarged sympathies of men; in the reverence which man has learned and is still learning to pay towards the nature of his fellow-men; in the deep belief that whatever change may and *must* take place in the social fabric—we have that spirit of wisdom and tolerance (certainly *not* a social creature of the golden days) waxing strong among us—so strong that the fabric will be altered and repaired brick by brick, and stone by stone. Meanwhile, the scaffolding is fast growing up about it.

FIRESIDE SAINTS

ST. DOLLY

At an early age St. Dolly showed the sweetness of her nature by her tender love for her widowed father, a baker, dwelling at Pie Corner, with a large family of little children. It chanced that with bad harvests bread became so dear that, of course, bakers were ruined by high prices. The miller fell upon Dolly's father, and swept the shop with his golden thumb. Not a bed was left for the baker or his little ones. St. Dolly slept upon a flour sack, having prayed that good angels would help her to help her father. Now sleeping, she dreamt that the oven was lighted, and she felt falling in a shower about her raisins, currants, almonds, lemon peel, flour, with heavy drops of brandy. Then in her dreams she saw the fairies gather up the things that fell and knead them into a cake. They put the cake into the oven, and dancing round and round, the fairies vanished, crying, '*Draw the cake, Dolly—Dolly, draw the cake!*' And Dolly awoke and drew the cake, and, behold, it was the first twelfth cake, sugared at the top, and bearing the images of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Now this cake, shown in the window, came to the king's ear; and the king bought the cake, knighted the baker, and married Dolly to his grand falconer, to whom she proved a faithful and loving wife, bearing him a baker's dozen of lovely children.

ST. PATTY

St. Patty was an orphan, and dwelt in a cot with a sour old aunt. It chanced, it being bitter cold, that three hunters came and craved for meat and drink. 'Pack!' said the sour aunt, 'neither meat nor drink

have ye here.' 'Neither meat nor drink,' said Patty; 'but something better.' And she ran and brought some milk, some eggs, and some flour, and, beating them up, poured the batter in the pan. Then she took the pan and tossed the cake over; and then a robin alighted at the window, and kept singing these words—*One good turn deserves another.* And Patty tossed and tossed the cakes; and the hunters ate their fill and departed. And next day the hunter-baron came in state to the cot; and trumpets were blown, and the heralds cried—*One good turn deserves another;* in token whereof Patty became the baron's wife, and pancakes were eaten on Shrove Tuesday ever after.

ST. NORAH.

St. Norah was a poor girl, and came to England to service. Sweet-tempered and gentle, she seemed to love everything she spoke to. And she prayed to St. Patrick that he would give her a good gift that would make her not proud but useful: and St. Patrick, out of his own head, taught St. Norah *how to boil a potato.* A sad thing, and to be lamented, that the secret has come down to so few.

ST. BETSY.

St. Betsy was wedded to a knight who sailed with Raleigh and brought home tobacco; and the knight smoked. But he thought that St. Betsy, like other fine ladies of the court, would fain that he should smoke out of doors, not taint with 'bacco-smoke the tapestry. Whereupon the knight would seek his garden, his orchard, and in any weather smoke *sub Jove.* Now it chanced as the knight smoked, St. Betsy came to him and said, 'My lord, pray ye come into the house.' And the knight went with St. Betsy, who took him into a newly-cedared room, and said, 'I pray, my lord, henceforth smoke here: for is it not a shame that

you, who are the foundation and the prop of your house, should have no place to put your head into and smoke ? ' And St. Betsy led him to a chair, and with her own fingers filled him a pipe; and from that time the knight sat in the cedar chamber and smoked his weed.

ST. PHILLIS.

St. Phillis was a virgin of noble parentage, but withal as simple as any shepherdess of curds and cream. She married a wealthy lord, and had much pin-money. But when other ladies wore diamond and pearls, St. Phillis only wore a red and white rose in her hair. Yet her pin-money brought the best of jewellery in the happy eyes of the poor about her. St. Phillis was rewarded. She lived until fourscore, and still carried the red and white rose in her face, and left their fragrance in her memory.

ST. PHŒBE.

St. Phœbe was married early to a wilful, but withal a good-hearted husband. He was a merchant, and would come home sour and sullen from 'change. Whereupon, after much pondering, St. Phœbe in her patience set to work, and, praying the while, made of dyed lambs'-wool a door-mat. And it chanced from that time, that never did the husband touch that mat that it didn't clean his temper with his shoes, and he sat down by his Phœbe as mild as the lamb whose wool he had trod upon. Thus gentleness may make miraculous door-mats !

ST. SALLY.

St. Sally, from her childhood, was known for her innermost love of truth. It was said of her that her heart was a crystal shrine, and all the world might see it. Moreover, when other women denied or strove to hide their age, St. Sally said, ' I am five-and-thirty.'

Whereupon next birthday St. Sally's husband, at a feast of all their friends, gave her a necklace of six-and-thirty opal beads; and on every birthday added a bead, until the beads mounted to four-score and one. And the beads seemed to act as a charm; for St. Sally, wearing the sum of her age about her neck, age never appeared in her face. Such, in the olden time, was the reward of simplicity and truth.

ST. BECKY.

A very good man was St. Becky's husband, but with his heart a little too much in his bottle. Port wine—red port wine—was his delight, and his constant cry was—bee's-wing. Now as he sat tipsy in his arbour, a wasp dropped into his glass, and the wasp was swallowed, stinging the man inwardly. Doctors crowded, and with much ado the man's life was saved. Now St. Becky nursed her husband tenderly to health, and upbraided him not; but she said these words, and they reformed him:—'*My dear, take wine, and bless your heart with it—but wine in moderation: else, never forget that the bee's wing of to-day becomes the wasp's sting of to-morrow.*

ST. LILY.

St. Lily was the wife of a poor man, who tried to support his family—and the children were many—by writing books. But in those days it was not as easy for a man to find a publisher as to say his paternoster. Many were the books that were written by the husband of St. Lily; but to every book St. Lily gave at least two babes. However, blithe as the cricket was the spirit that ruled about the hearth of St. Lily. And how she helped her helpmate! She smiled sunbeams into his ink bottle, and turned his goose pen to the quill of a dove! She made the paper he wrote on as white as her name, and as fragrant as her soul. And when folks wondered how St. Lily managed so lightly with

fortune's troubles, she always answered, that she never heeded them, for *troubles were like babies, and only grew the bigger by nursing.*

ST. FANNY.

St. Fanny was a notable housewife. Her house was a temple of neatness. Kings might have dined upon her staircase! Now her great delight was to provide all things comfortable for her husband, a hard-working merchant, much abroad, but loving his home. Now one night he returned tired and hungry, and, by some mischance, there was nothing for supper. Shops were shut; and great was the grief of St. Fanny. Taking off a bracelet of seed pearl she said, '*I'd give this ten times over for a supper for my husband.*' And every pearl straightway became an oyster, and St. Fanny opened—the husband ate—and lo! in every oyster was a pearl as big as a hazel nut; and so was St. Fanny made rich for life.

ST. FLORENCE.

St. Florence, by her works, had her lips blessed with comforting, and her hands touched with healing; and she crossed the sea, and built hospitals, and solaced, and restored. And so long as English mistletoe gathers beneath it truthful hearts, and English holly brightens happy eyes, so long will Englishmen, at home or abroad, on land or on the wave—so long, in memory of that Eastern Christmas, will they cry—*God bless St. Florence! Bless St. Nightingale!*

ST. JENNY.

St. Jenny was wedded to a very poor man; they had scarcely bread to keep them; but Jenny was of so sweet a temper that even want bore a bright face, and Jenny always smiled. In the worst seasons Jenny

would spare crumbs for the birds, and sugar for the bees. Now it so happened that one autumn a storm rent their cot in twenty places apart; when, behold, between the joists, from the basement to the roof, there was nothing but honeycomb and honey—a little fortune for St. Jenny and her husband, in honey. Now some said it was the bees, but more declared it was the sweet temper of St. Jenny that had filled the poor man's house with honey.

BREVITIES

FORTUNE is painted blind, that she may not blush to behold the fools who belong to her.

Fine ladies, who use excess of perfumes, must think men like seals—most assailable at the nose.

Some men get on in the world on the same principle that a sweep passes uninterruptedly through a crowd.

People who affect a shortness of sight must think it the height of good fortune to be born blind.

He who loses, in the search of fame, that dignity which should adorn human nature, is like the victim opera-singer who has exchanged manhood for sound.

Lounging, unemployed people may be called of the tribe of Joshua, for with them the sun stands still.

Fanatics think men like bulls—they must be baited to madness ere they are in a fit condition to die.

There is an ancient saying, 'Truth lies in a well.' May not the modern adage run, 'The most certain charity is at a pump'?

Some connoisseurs would give a hundred pounds for the painted head of a beggar, that would threaten the living mendicant with the stocks.

If you boast of a contempt for the world, avoid getting into debt. It is giving to gnats the fangs of vipers.

The heart of the great man, surrounded by poverty and trammelled by dependence, is like an egg in a nest built among briers. It must either curdle into bitterness, or, if it take life and mount, struggle through thorns for the ascent.

Fame is represented bearing a trumpet. Would not the picture be truer were she to hold a handful of dust?

Fishermen, in order to handle eels securely, first

cover them with dirt. In like manner does detraction strive to grasp excellence.

The friendship of some men is quite Briarean—they have a hundred hands.

The easy and temperate man is not he who is most valued by the world; the virtue of his abstemiousness makes him an object of indifference. One of the gravest charges against the ass is—he can live on thistles.

The wounds of the dead are the furrows in which living heroes grow their laurels.

Were we determined resolutely to avoid vices, the world would foist them on us—as thieves put off their plunder on the guiltless.

When we look at the hide of a tiger in a furrier's shop, exposed to the gaze of every malapert, and then think of the ferocity of the living beast in his native jungle, we see a beadle before a magistrate—a magistrate before a minister. There is the *skin* of office—the sleekness without its claws.

With some people political vacillation heightens a man's celebrity—just as the galleries applaud when an actor enters in a new dress.

If we judge from history, of what is the book of glory composed? Are not its leaves dead men's skin—its letters stamped in human blood—its golden clasps the pillage of nations? It is illuminated with tears and broken hearts.

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